

King congratulates Majali

MAYO CLINIC (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday phoned Abdul Hadi Majali congratulating him on his election as Lower House speaker and wishing him success in serving the country and the democratic march. Majali expressed deep appreciation and gratitude for the King's call, stressing that he will work hard with his colleagues to serve Jordan and democracy. King Hussein also phoned Sa'd Hayel Srour and expressed appreciation for his efforts as speaker during the past four years.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية. الراي.

Norway ends participation in U.N. peacekeeping force

BEIRUT (AP) — Norway formally ended its 20-year role in the U.N. peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon on Saturday, saying it was sad to be leaving the conflict zone. Some 21 Norwegian soldiers have died since 1978 when the country helped set up the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) to police the Lebanese-Israeli border, where guerrillas exchange fire daily with Israeli troops and their allied militia. In a ceremony at UNIFIL headquarters in Ehl Al Saqi, in the Israeli-occupied zone of Lebanon, Norwegian Defence Minister Dag Jostein Fjærvoll said his country was withdrawing its 470 troops "not without sadness." "The work has not ended and the mission has not been completed, but we are pleased and honoured to hand over responsibility to the Indians," he said. Some 670 Indians have replaced the Norwegian battalion.

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HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, delivers the Speech from the Throne in the Parliament on Saturday to inaugurate the new parliamentary session on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein (Photo by Youssef 'Allan)

Regent opens 2nd session of 13th Parliament Crown Prince Hassan reaffirms Jordan's support for Palestinians *Dialogue is a sophisticated instrument for benefiting from people's aspirations, creativity, and grand insight*

By Francesca Ciriaci

AMMAN — HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Saturday opened the second ordinary session of the 13th Parliament with a reaffirmation of Jordan's full support for the Palestinians and a strong warning that any detraction in their legitimate right to an independent state would threaten the security of the Kingdom and the region as a whole.

"We firmly believe in the right of the Palestinian people to their land, resources, and state," the Regent said in the traditional Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament's annual four-month session.

"The Palestinians' achievement of their legitimate rights in full is a cornerstone for our own security and the security of the region at large."

"Any detraction in these rights is tantamount to a violation of the security of this country and a threat to its stability, for we share the same destiny."

Prince stressed Jordan's resolve to "keep intact the cohesion of our internal front."

In an implicit reference to opposition groups based in neighbouring countries, he warned that the government will "relentlessly and confi-

dently confront whoever tries to create rifts" among Jordanians of different origins and roots.

During his speech, which traditionally defines government policy, Prince Hassan pledged that the government of Prime Minister Fayez Tarawneh would continue on the path of privatisation, "based on market liberalisation, protection of competitiveness, support for productivity and quality, and attracting direct Arab and foreign investment."

Business circles praised Prince Hassan's emphasis on measures aimed at strengthening the private sector, which he said owns and runs two-thirds of the economy.

"The government will encourage the private sector and support its investment ini-

tiatives, which purport to enter non-traditional export markets, and to develop and enhance productivity in the field of tourism and other areas," the Regent said.

On domestic politics, the Regent reiterated the govern-

ment's commitment to mutual consultation and open dialogue among all society sectors.

"Dialogue is not meant to be an exercise in futile argumentation and sophistry. We rather see it as a sophisticated instrument for benefiting from the aspirations of our citizens, their creativity and grand insight," Prince Hassan said.

On the regional level, Prince Hassan stressed that Jordan's "pan-Arab stance will continue to be a guiding principle underlying our policies and decisions."

He said Jordan will continue to maintain cooperation and coordination with all sisterly states, within a framework that respects the particularities of each state and aims at achieving what is best for the nation.

"We shall never hesitate to do our best to lift the embargo imposed on any Arab country, especially on Iraq, Sudan, and Libya," he said, adding that the Kingdom will "spare no effort to heal any rift among our brothers."

Prince Hassan also addressed the issues of Islamophobia and discrimination against Arabs.

"We are going through an era in which Islam and Muslims are subjected to an unjust campaign. A similar campaign is directed against the identity of Christian Arabs," he said.

"We have to put things right at their point of origin, relying on positive interaction and engagement with other nations and civilisations, whilst defending our religion and values, and highlighting the true image of our culture."

place in the next weeks — and current plans to amend legislation governing the economy.

"We look forward to a stronger monetary policy, as announced by the Crown Prince," said Khaldoun Abu Hassan, the chairman of the Amman Chamber of Industry.

"But in order to avoid that higher interest rates, necessary to ensure the stability of the Jordanian dinar, harm some economic activities, we also call for a comprehensive fiscal, monetary, and economic policy," Abu Hassan said.

Political party leaders hailed the Crown Prince's pledge that the Tarawneh government would strengthen civil society organisations, and "lend support to our national parties in order for this political experience to be successful."

Abdul Latif Arabiyat, the secretary general of the Islamic Action Front, told the Jordan Times that "a great deal of goodwill and seriousness" regarding the national dialogue among all components of society were reflected in the Speech from the Throne.

The Crown Prince has previously opened Parliament on three occasions — in 1967, 1968, and 1970.

Israeli police clash with Palestinian protesters

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Several dozen Palestinian demonstrators clashed with Israeli police in Arab east Jerusalem on Saturday during a protest demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails, witnesses and Israeli police said.

They said demonstrators blocked streets with burning tyres and threw stones and bottles at Israeli police who responded with rubber bullets and batons.

A photographer at the scene said at least four journalists were pushed and beaten by police and at least one was taken to hospital. A

police spokesman confirmed that batons and rubber coated metal bullets had been used but said he knew of no injuries.

Police prevented demonstrators from carrying out an unauthorised march in Arab east Jerusalem, occupied by Israel during the 1967 Middle East war. One demonstrator was arrested.

Several hundred Palestinians also took part in demonstrations in the West Bank towns of Hebron, Bethlehem, Nablus and nearby Tubas demanding freedom for prisoners.

In Bethlehem, witnesses said Palestinians threw

stones at Israeli soldiers and burned an Israeli flag.

Palestinian officials said 125 Palestinian detainees at Shatta prison in northern Israel had joined prisoners in Megiddo and Ashkelon prisons on a hunger strike launched last Sunday by members of Fateh, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's mainstream faction in the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

The prisoners are protesting against Israel's refusal to free them as part of the land-for-security deal it signed with the Palestinians after the U.S. Middle East summit last month.

Prisoners have also accused the Palestinian leadership of not pressing Israel hard enough to secure their release.

"Tell, [Saeb] Erekat that we are bored with his statements. What we want is to see the release of the prisoners," a crowd of demonstrators in Nablus chanted, referring to the chief Palestinian negotiator.

Under U.S. pressure, Israel agreed at the Wye River summit to free 750 prisoners in three stages over 12 weeks. The oral agreement was not mentioned in the accord or accompanying letters.

Arafat has said Israel's inclusion of 150 common criminals in a first-round release of 250 prisoners earlier this month violated the spirit of the deal. He called on Israel to release 150 additional political prisoners.

At the Palestinian cabinet meeting in Gaza on Friday, Arafat said Israel should not use prisoners as a bargaining chip to obtain additional concessions.

"The freedom of our peoples' heroes, the prisoners in the occupation jails is an issue we will not compromise on," the official Palestinian Wafa news agency quoted Arafat as saying.

U.N. arms experts insist on Friday inspections in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — U.N. arms experts insisted Saturday that they have to carry out site inspections in Iraq on a daily basis, including the Muslim weekly day of rest, despite complaints by officials here.

"We go out on inspections on Fridays and always have done, like every day," said Caroline Cross, a spokeswoman for the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) in charge of disarming Iraq.

An Iraqi general who heads the National Monitoring Directorate which liaises with UNSCOM and escorts its arms inspectors on site visits had lodged a complaint on Friday.

UNSCOM checked 10 sites despite a pledge to trim their activities on the day of the Muslim weekly prayers to mosques, said General Hossein Mohammad Arin.

However, the inspection teams from UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) went out as on the previous Fri-

day, more than an hour later than on other days of the week, witnesses said.

Iraq has also reported that UNSCOM is stepping up the pace of its "surprise" inspections since returning from evacuation on Nov. 17 after a threat of U.S.-British air strikes faded.

Cross said Saturday that all inspections are carried out on a "surprise" basis. "They're all surprise or unannounced or no-notice, it's all the same thing," she told AFP.

In contrast, "intrusive" inspections are visits to "new, undeclared sites. We call it a 'baseline' inspection," she said, declining to disclose if such work has started yet to test Iraqi cooperation.

On Saturday, several jeeps left the U.N. arms monitoring centre set up at a former hotel in Baghdad.

"We are carrying on with our activities. All the teams have gone out today," Cross, referring to experts in ballistic, biological, chemical and nuclear weaponry.

UNSCOM resumed its inspections in Iraq on Nov. 18, four days after Iraq backed down on a decision to halt all cooperation amid U.S. and British warnings of punitive strikes.

Despite the renewed cooperation on the ground, Iraq and UNSCOM are locked in a row over arms documents.

At the United Nations on Friday, Iraq renewed a charge that warhead samples analysed by a U.S. army laboratory, which concluded Baghdad had weaponised VX nerve gas, were deliberately tampered with.

In a letter to UNSCOM chairman Richard Butler, foreign ministry undersecretary Riyadh Al Qaysi again denied that Iraq had loaded VX onto missiles before the 1991 Gulf war over Kuwait.

Qaysi also declined to provide new information in response to Butler's demands for more data on Iraq's chemical weapons and the total number of missile warheads.

Israeli forces strike Hizbollah strongholds

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli forces bombarded suspected Hizbollah targets in Lebanon overnight in retaliation for deadly attacks on its soldiers, but analysts say the Jewish state is powerless against the tactics of Hizbollah.

Several Israeli warplanes struck suspected Hizbollah strongholds just north of the Israeli-occupied border strip, an army spokesman said here.

Security sources in southern Lebanon said Israeli artillery also pounded villages east of the Lebanese port city of Tyre with more than 70 shells.

There were no reports of casualties.

On Friday, the Israeli army warned Lebanese civilians it was preparing to bombard a string of areas close to the occupied border strip in a statement broadcast on the radio of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia.

The warning followed mounting Israeli casualties in attacks in south Lebanon in recent weeks which prompted Prime Minister Benjamin

Netanyahu to cut short a visit to Europe Friday.

Two Israeli soldiers were killed and two wounded in the buffer zone over Thursday night, bringing the toll from Hizbollah attacks over the past two weeks to seven killed and nine wounded.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai called a meeting of top military and intelligence aides late Saturday to prepare policy recommendations for a meeting of Israel's security cabinet on Sunday.

Israeli commanders routinely meet to review policy in southern Lebanon every six months but their next meeting had not been due until next week.

Israeli military analysts say the army's tactical options on the ground are extremely limited.

All four Israeli soldiers slain Wednesday and Thursday were killed by well-crafted booby traps — one of the bombs was hidden at head height in a tree and detonated by remote control. Israel Radio said.

Majali elected House speaker

By Fairouz Abu-Ghazaleh

AMMAN — In a surprise win, Deputy Abdul Hadi Majali snatched the Lower House speakership today replacing incumbent Sa'd Hayel Srour and beating two other contenders.

The four contestants were Srour, Majali, former industry and trade minister Ali Abul Ragheb and Islamist deputy Abdullah Akaileh.

Deputies and observers had earlier named Srour, Abul Ragheb and Majali as the most likely candidates to succeed. But most were taken aback when Srour fell out of the race after the first round of voting, especially since many strongly believed that he was certain to secure his fifth term as speaker.

Majali assumed the one-year speakership after securing 43 votes in the second round of voting. He marginally defeated Abul

Ragheb, who garnered 36 votes.

In the first round, Majali obtained 32 votes, Abul Ragheb 21, Srour 18 and Akaileh eight (one deputy abstained).

"I pledge to live up to your expectations and to be a president and a brother to all without taking sides with a certain group, bloc or party for we are all a 'nation' bloc," the new speaker told the House after assuming his seat.

Later in the day, the House elected Zayza Deputy Bassam Haddadin as first deputy. Haddadin obtained 40 votes defeating Deputy Ghazi Fayeze of the Central Badia by one vote.

Irbid Deputy Sami Khasawneh was elected as second deputy after securing 62 votes. Khasawneh's opponent, Mikhail Zawahreh of Zarqa, won 12 votes.

Both the Upper and



Abdul Hadi Majali

Lower Houses have formed special committees to draft replies to the Speech from the Throne delivered Saturday by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, at a joint session of the 120-seat bicameral chamber.

(Continued on page 12)

Italy and Germany to seek ways of putting Ocalan on trial

ROME (AFP) — Germany and Italy said Saturday they would "begin joint efforts" to ensure Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan is put on trial.

Italian and German legal experts will meet from Monday to examine the possibility of creating an "international court with the power to judge" Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) leader Ocalan, according to a statement released after a meeting between Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini and his German opposite number Joschka Fischer in Rome on Saturday.

Ocalan was arrested in Rome on Nov. 12, but Italy's refusal to extradite him to Turkey — where he

could face the death penalty — has sparked a bitter diplomatic row which has spilled into trade and sport.

A joint statement issued by Dini and Fischer also said Germany and Italy would "jointly begin a European initiative for a peaceful solution in south-eastern Turkey and to bring Turkey closer to the European Union."

Turkey is continuing its efforts to secure the extradition of Ocalan, who is currently under house arrest in Rome.

Ankara will officially present its request for his extradition in the middle of next week, ANSA news agency cited the Turkish ambassador as saying Saturday.

Two Turkish couriers arrived in Rome earlier Saturday to hand over the extradition file to Turkey's ambassador in Italy, Inal Banu.

The 900-page extradition file reportedly includes verdicts given by Turkish courts as well as documents, video tapes and photographs implicating Ocalan and his PKK in crimes.

Attorneys representing the Turkish envoy to Italy, Augusto Sinagra and Attilio Caroselli, said they would appeal to Italy's highest appeals court after a lower court put Ocalan under house arrest.

(Continued on page 12)

Over 7,000 candidates to compete in Syrian legislative elections

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Nearly 7,400 candidates will compete Monday for the 250 seats in Syria's parliament, the People's Assembly, in legislative elections expected to be dominated by the pro-government coalition.

Some 127 seats reserved for labourers and farmers will be fought by over 4,000 prospective lawmakers while the remaining candidates will contest 123 seats set aside for other sectors of the 15-million-strong population. Interior Minister Mohammad Harba said.

President Hafez Assad's National Progressive Front (NPF), which has won a majority of seats at the six legislative elections since Assad came to power 28 years ago, has "every chance of winning" for a seventh time, diplomats here say.

The NPF coalition of seven parties headed by the ruling Baath Arab Socialist Party will present 167 candidates.

At the last elections in August 1994, all 167 of the NPF's candidates were elected, the remaining 83 seats going to "independents."

A large number of wealthy businessmen and professionals with vague manifestos are running for the independent seats.

Some of the candidates, whose faces and names are posted all over the capital, are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on their campaigns, inviting voters to their homes for coffee and cakes.

At the home of a wealthy chocolate maker, Adnan Dakkhani, friends and supporters are treated to a full dinner.

One of few candidates with

a detailed list of electoral promises is 52-year-old businessman and current member of parliament Riad Seif, who is campaigning for "greater freedom of expression, lower unemployment and restructuring the economy."

Seif, who secured the largest number of votes for an independent candidate in the 1994 elections, told AFP he is optimistic that he can live up to his promises because he feels a "political will" among Syrian officials "to make the most of the country's human resources."

Another contestant, Aref Hanano, who has published his manifesto in three official Damascus daily newspapers wants to "improve wages, raise the standard of living, reduce taxes for the workers and put more weight on social issues."

But there are few candidates representing political parties outside the National Progressive Front coalition such as current member of parliament and doctor Basil Dahdoudh representing the secular, pan-Arab Syrian National Party.

Meanwhile, the official press is publishing more and more announcements of electoral meetings with NPF candidates in the run up to Saturday when electioneering closes.

Around 6.6 million voting card holders across the country's 15 governorates will each vote Monday from lists for a number of candidates in a one chance majority vote to elect deputies for parliament's next four year term.

Nearly 8,500 voting centres have been set up across the country in schools, factories and public buildings.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran considers Norway diplomacy request

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran said Saturday it is considering an official request from Norway to upgrade diplomatic ties strained three years ago over Tehran's death threat against author Salman Rushdie. Foreign Ministry spokesman, Hamid Reza Asefi, said Tehran detected "a transformation in the Norwegian outlook" on Iran, the official Islamic Republic News Agency reported. It quoted him as saying that Norway had submitted an official request to exchange ambassadors. Norway withdrew its ambassador to Iran in July 1995, leaving diplomatic representation at a lower level. Iran recalled its ambassador the previous year to protest what it called Oslo's hostile attitude. A statement from the foreign ministry in Oslo said Norway was ready to appoint a new ambassador to Tehran after Iranian Foreign Minister Karam Kharazi in September guaranteed that his government would not support any steps to carry out the death order against Rushdie.

'Iran takes action against sanctions-busters'

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian navy announced on Saturday that it had intercepted a number of boats in its territorial waters over recent days carrying cargo for Iraq in violation of U.N. sanctions. The navy impounded another vessel earlier this month, but a court order later forced it to release it. The official news agency IRNA said. Iran has angrily denied U.S. charges that it turns a blind eye to Iraq's efforts to get around the crippling U.N. embargo imposed following its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Bahrain says islands dispute with Qatar over

DUBAI (AFP) — Qatar's claim to the disputed Hawar islands is without basis and the matter is effectively over now that the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is adjudicating the dispute, a Bahraini official said in an interview published Saturday. "There's no longer any basis [to Qatar's claim] concerning Bahrain's sovereignty on the Hawar islands," Bahrain Information Minister Mohammad Al Mutawa said in Saturday's edition of the Al Hayat newspaper. Qatari officials refused comment on Mutawa's statement, with one confirming only that the matter was under consideration by the ICJ in the Hague, the "competent body" to adjudicate the dispute.

PKK, Turkish agents battle in Cyberspace

ISTANBUL (AFP) — The publishers of an Internet website dedicated to lobbying for the release of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan have complained of humiliated interference attempts from the Turkish secret service MIT. In an e-mail distributed to its mailing list and received Saturday in Istanbul, the Centre for Kurdish Political Studies (CKPS) claimed MIT agents posing as technical staff from its Internet service provider had attempted to convince them to change their password, in order to tap into the site and change its content. "Hi - please change your password to PKK4321 for a security problem," the e-mail message from the "technical staff" read, according to CKPS. "The e-mail is easily traceable back to www.mit.gov.tr," the publishers said.

Iranian minister vows to track down killers of opposition leader

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian Interior Minister Abdul Vahed Musavi Lari vowed on Saturday to track down and arrest the killers of nationalist opposition leader Dariush Foruhar and his wife.

"This case will definitely be clarified. We will not hesitate for one moment. You will see that it will soon be discovered and the people will be informed," Musavi Lari told a press conference.

"The government is determined to get to the root of the matter and deal with the culprits whoever they may be or whatever their position," he said.

Foruhar, the leader of the Iranian Nation's Party, a movement banned but tolerated, and his wife, Parvaneh, were stabbed to death in their Tehran home over the weekend by intruders posing as guests.

Known for his strongly-held secular and nationalist views, Foruhar, a former labour minister, had been a strong critic of the Islamic regime.

Musavi Lari said he had been given instructions to "seriously pursue the case" by supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Mohammad Khatami.

"I assure you that the entire regime is behind the drive to solve the case with authority. They see the bitter incident as a move to fight the regime," he said.

"Some unclean, known or unknown hands are behind this attempt to destroy the new atmosphere of law and order which the government

advocates," the minister added.

He said a committee has been set up at the country's national security council to pursue the matter. The committee held a five-hour meeting on Friday and "some clues have been found," he said.

"Several people have been arrested and are being interrogated and some others are being sought. Their arrest may help us find the truth," Musavi Lari said.

But he said the authorities were still weighing various theories behind the murder case. "So far, we have no preference. I can't make a final judgement," the minister said.

Earlier a group of about 700 academics and liberal opposition sympathisers signed a joint letter denouncing the murder of Foruhar and his wife.

"Once again the criminal hands of the enemies of freedom have savagely killed a hero and his combatant wife," the 673 signatories said in their letter published in the moderate paper Ettelaat.

Signatories, who included former ministers and prominent professionals close to Iran's liberal opposition movement, announced they would gather on Monday in a central Tehran mosque close to the victims' home.

The murder has caused uproar in Iran, with Khatami denouncing it as a "repulsive crime" and ordering a special probe into the case, even though Foruhar was one of the Islamic regime's most outspoken domestic critics.



ANTI-OCALAN PROTEST IN BERLIN: Several thousand demonstrators waving Turkish flags and protest placards gather Saturday in downtown Berlin demanding the extradition of Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) leader Abdullah Ocalan to Turkey or to Germany. The placard reads 'Murderer Ocalan must be brought to court.' The detention of Ocalan in Italy and Germany's decision not to ask for his extradition has caused diplomatic tension between Rome, Bonn and Ankara over the last two weeks (AFP photo)

Cyprus insists on deploying Russian missiles on its soil

LARNACA (AP) — The S-300 anti-aircraft missiles that Cyprus has bought from Russia will be deployed in Cyprus as planned despite Turkish threats and Greek disapproval, the Cypriot foreign minister said Saturday.

The minister, Yiannakis Cassoulides, made the comments on his return from a Greek-Cypriot summit in Athens where the two countries failed to agree on the final destination of the missiles.

The Greek government is against the deployment of the missiles in Cyprus to avoid being dragged into hostilities with Turkey, which has threatened to use military force to prevent the deployment.

A Turkish action will automatically involve Greece

under its joint defence pact with Cyprus.

During the Athens summit Friday, Greek Premier Costas Karamanlis proposed setting up the missiles on the Greek island of Crete.

But Cypriot President Glafos Clerides refused to budge. The media in Greece and Cyprus described the talks as "stormy." Cassoulides said the matter will be discussed by the National Council, the Greek Cypriot policy-making body, which had initially decided last summer on basing the missiles in Cyprus.

Cassoulides said that decision "is still valid." Similarly, the Greek premier, also acknowledged that the final word rests with Cyprus. "In this case, and any other case, the Cyprus government will decide and there will be con-

sultations with Greece before hand."

Cyprus has been criticised by the United States and the European Union for its stand. The missiles are expected to be delivered in a month or two.

Cassoulides said Cyprus is ready to cooperate with the international community for the reduction of tensions on the island through its demilitarisation proposal, which is rejected by Turkey, and intensified efforts for the island's reunification.

Cyprus has been split into a Greek Cypriot controlled south and a Turkish-occupied north since Turkey invaded and occupied its northern third in 1974. A breakthrough Turkish Cypriot state in the north is only recognised by Ankara which maintains 35,000 troops there.

Iraqi commandos crack down in Karbala after attack

BAGHDAD (AP) — President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, sent commandos to the southern city of Karbala during a crackdown following the assassination attempt on Saddam's deputy, Babel newspaper reported Saturday.

The newspaper, published by Uday, said 29 "saboteurs and agents" were arrested in the crackdown that took place 72 hours after the bid on Uday's life on Monday.

It did not say how many of the tough and lightly armed commandos from Saddam's Fedayeen took part or how long the operation lasted.

Karbala is in the southern Shiite Muslim heartland, which has long been a source of opposition to Saddam.

Fedayeen is a paramilitary force of about 40,000 men by Uday.

To emphasise their ferocity, its commandos are often shown on television, bunched together, wearing black headscarves, cats, dogs and wolves, and then eating their raw meat.

They wear black masks of duty and their rough training is geared towards defending the country in a crisis.

Ibrahim escaped without injuries when an unidentified assailant hurled two grenades while he was attending a religious ceremony in Karbala, a Shiite holy city 110 kilometers south of Baghdad.

Several of Ibrahim's bodyguards and bystanders were wounded.

Witnesses said the lone attacker was killed by Ibrahim's bodyguards on the spot.

"Babel has learned that the hero from Saddam's Fedayeen... stormed the house after the aggression on Mr. Ibrahim," the report in Babel said.

It said the decision to send the commandos was taken by Uday.

Babel did not say whether the 39 arrested people were involved in the assassination attempt but described them as those "who had sold themselves to the enemy." Ibrahim is Saddam's deputy on the powerful Revolutionary Command Council. He also serves as a deputy commander of the Iraqi armed forces.

No one has so far claimed responsibility for the attack on Ibrahim but Babel's report hinted that foreign agents were behind it — a reference to Iran.

Iraqi dissidents abroad claim Baghdad falsified the news about the assassination attempt to increase its reputation of Shiite Muslims in southern Iraq.

JORDAN TELEVISION

TEL 4773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:50 Football Match
16:35 Vid Kids
17:10 The American Chart Show
18:00 French Programme — "Le Grand Secret"
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 French Programme
19:30 News Headlines
19:33 The British Empire
20:00 French Programme — A Figue
20:30 Drama — Walker, Texas Ranger
21:15 Doc — Farming and Ecology
21:30 Behind the Scenes
22:00 News in English
22:30 Mini-series — Nothing lasts for Ever
23:10 Drama — Doggie Houser
23:59 End of T.X.

PRAYER TIMES

04:50 Fair
06:11 (Sunrise) Duha
11:24 Dhuhur
14:13 'Asr
16:36 Maghreb
17:58 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swefieh, Tel. 5920740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 4632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 4622366
Anglican Church Tel. 4624534/4624811
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Temperatures will drop slightly, with skies partly cloudy. Light showers are expected over mountainous areas, and winds south-easterly to westerly light to moderate. In Aqaba, it will be occasionally dusty, cloudy, winds northerly moderate to active, and seas calm.

Min/Max temp.
Amman.....14/22
Aqaba.....17/26
Deserts.....12/23
Jordan Valley.....19/24

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 23, Aqaba 29 Humidity readings: Amman 33 per cent, Aqaba 43 per cent.

Following are the temperatures expected today in the following areas:

Ajloun.....09/15
Jerash.....11/22
Um Qays.....10/17
Madaba.....10/20
Petra.....09/20
Dead Sea.....14/23

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Khalil Ramadan.....5358723
Dr. Nidal Dahleh.....5827195
Dr. Osama Hussein.....5347289
Dr. Sa'id Tawfiq.....4788285
AMMAN:
Firas Pharmacy.....5661912
Al Salam Pharmacy.....4636730
Mayadah Pharmacy.....5537004
Rukn Al Dawa Pharmacy.....5536169

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Church Tel. 4771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 5865897
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 5688404
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 5811395
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Tel. 4654932
St. John the Baptist at De la Salle College Tel. 5661757
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 4637440
Greek Orthodox Church Tel. 4646138
Church of Presentation, Sweifieh Tel. 5920146
The Uniate Catholic Church Tel. 4624757
The English-Latin Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190
Evangelical Free Church Tel. 4892679
The Baptist Church Tel. 4628052
The Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 4771331
The Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 4775261

IRBID:
Dr. Lutfi Shalabi.....(02)241798
Fou'ad Pharmacy.....(02)275360
ZARQA:
Dr. Ra'if Attallah.....(09)994424
Palestine Pharmacy.....(09)83562

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre.....4637111
Civil Defence Department.....5661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue.....4630341
Civil Defence Emergency.....199
Rescue Police 192.462111.4637777
Fire Brigade.....4617101
Blood Bank.....4775121
Highway Police.....5343402
Traffic Police.....4896390
Public Security Dept.....4630321
Hotel Complaints.....5605800
Price Complaints.....5661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints.....487467
Amman Municipality Complaints.....4787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance).....0132
Overseas Calls.....0132
Central Amman Telephone Repairs.....4623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs.....5661101
Jordan Television.....4773111
Radio Jordan.....4741111
Water Authority.....5680100
J. Electricity Authority.....5815615
Electric Power Co.....4636381
RJ Flight Information.....44-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport.....44-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery.....5921199
The Islamic, Abdali.....5666131/77
Husseini Medical Centre.....5858656
Luzuluia.....4630195
Khaldi Maternity.....4644281/6
Alkhaldi Maternity.....4644241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity.....4642362
Malhas J. Amman.....4636140
Palestine, Shmeisani.....5607071
Shmeisani Hospital.....5607431
Jordan Hospital.....5607505
University Hospital.....5353444
Al-Muhsen Hospital.....5667227/9
Al-Ahli, Abdali.....5664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....4771013/3
Al-Bashir.....4775111/25
Army, Marka.....4891611/6
Queen Alia Hospital.....5157100
Amal Hospital.....5607155
Al Amal Cancer Centre.....5353000

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital.....(09)83323
Zarqa National Hospital.....(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital.....(09)986731
Al Hikma Modern Hospital.....(09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital.....(02)275555
Roman Catholic Hospital.....(02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital.....(02)7101372, (02)7103101
Rosary Sisters Hospital.....(02)7102831, (02)7102011
Specialty Hospital.....(02)7103100

AQABA: Princess Haya Hospital

(03)2014111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (44) 53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 4875201-5

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:10 Bangkok, Sharjah (RJ)
08:25 Bombay (RJ)
08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
08:50 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:00 Beirut (RJ)
09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
17:45 London (RJ)
18:05 Paris (RJ)
18:05 Athens (RJ)
18:25 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
08:20 Frankfurt (RJ)
22:40 Brussels (RJ)
22:50 Vienna, Aqaba (RJ)
23:59 Cairo (RJ)
01:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
01:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

07:55 Dubai (EK)
10:30 Jeddah (SV)
12:00 Moscow (SU)
12:30 Sana'a (Y)
12:30 Abu Dhabi (GF)
14:45 Doha (QR)
18:40 Beirut (ME)
19:05 Paris (AF)
20:25 Tel Aviv (LY)
20:40 Cairo (MS)
23:10 Istanbul (TK)
01:15 Amsterdam (KL)
04:15 London (BA)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
05:20 Beirut (RJ)
05:20 Aqaba, Paris (add) (RJ)
09:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
10:50 Aqaba, Vienna (RJ)
11:00 Munich, Brussels (RJ)
11:15 Rome (RJ)
11:25 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights

07:25 Frankfurt (LH)
07:25 Damascus, London (BA)
07:25 Paris (AF)
08:55 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (EK)
12:00 Jeddah (SV)
13:20 Doha (GF)
13:30 Moscow (SU)
13:30 Sana'a (Y)
15:35 Doha (QR)
20:00 Beirut (ME)
21:15 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:40 Cairo (MS)
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)
04:45 Alexandria (BA)

Royal Wings (RW)

07:00 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
08:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)
08:15 Tel Aviv (from QAIA) (RW)
16:15 Haifa (from Marka Airport) (RW)
17:00 Haifa (from QAIA) (RW)
18:30 Tel Aviv (from Marka Airport) (RW)
20:30 Aqaba (from Marka Airport) (RW)

NEWS IN

Iran expo opens in U

TEHRAN (AFP) — The wife of the late Iranian president, Zohreh Rahnouy, inaugurated a new exhibition at the United Nations in New York. The exhibition, organized by the federation of Iranian women, showcased the country's rich cultural heritage and its commitment to international cooperation. Rahnouy, who is also a member of the Iranian Parliament, expressed her pride in the exhibition and her hope that it would foster greater understanding and friendship between Iran and the rest of the world.

Japanese team discuss

TEHRAN (AFP) — Minister of Tourism and Cultural Heritage, Hossein Sadeghi, discussed the progress of a Japanese team's visit to Iran. The team, led by a Japanese expert in the field of tourism, is working on developing a joint tourism project between Iran and Japan. Sadeghi highlighted the importance of such collaborations in promoting the tourism industry and creating jobs for the Iranian people. He also mentioned that the team had visited various historical and cultural sites in Iran and had a productive meeting with local officials.

Meets with Sudanese n

TEHRAN (AFP) — Interior Minister Ali Akbar Velayati met with a Sudanese counterpart to discuss bilateral trade relations. The meeting took place in a formal setting and was attended by several officials from both countries. Velayati expressed his appreciation for the Sudanese government's efforts to improve trade relations with Iran and discussed various areas of cooperation, including trade, investment, and cultural exchange. He also mentioned that Iran was interested in expanding its trade ties with Sudan and hoped that the meeting would lead to concrete agreements.

FILMS

Iranian film "Die Winterreise" (The Winter Journey) will be shown at the French Cultural Centre in Tehran on Monday Nov. 30. The film, directed by a German filmmaker, tells the story of a man's journey through a winter landscape, exploring themes of love, loss, and redemption. It is a highly acclaimed work and is expected to attract a large audience. The French Cultural Centre is proud to present this film as part of its ongoing program of cultural exchange and artistic collaboration.

Godfrey Jansen, veteran journalist, dies at age 79

AMMAN (J.T.) — Indian journalist Godfrey Jansen, a long-time contributor of commentaries to the Jordan Times, died Thursday at the age of 79 in Nicosia.

Jansen was born in Akyab in Burma, where his father was collector of customs for the Arakan coast. By his high school years, the Jansen family had moved to Bangalore in South India.

Jansen earned his B.A. in English language and literature with honours at Madras Christian College in Tanjore.

His first job was at the Calcutta station of All India Radio ("reading among other things a recipe for upside-down cake," he once said). He taught at the government college in Rajahmundry before joining the Indian Air Force as an official war correspondent.

After World War II, he joined the National Herald as a journalist and from there opted for the foreign service, during which he was posted to Cairo, the United Nations in New York, Jakarta, Istanbul and Beirut as a press attaché. As a foreign service officer, he went to the Bandung Conference, attended by Jawaharlal Nehru, Gamal Abdul Nasser and Chou en Lai.

In Beirut, Jansen served as chargé d'affaires during the first civil war in the late 1950s. During this time, he was awarded the Order of the Cedars (officer rank) for his work and was also mentioned by name in the Indian parliament by Prime Minister Nehru.

Jansen's connection with Jordan began in 1948, when he visited Jerusalem during the Arab-Israeli war. In 1959, he joined The Statesman and served for more than 10 years as their West Asia correspondent. In 1970, he became the "Levant correspondent" for The Economist, serving 18 years during which he expanded his area of coverage to the entire Muslim World.

Jansen met His Majesty King Hussein and HRH Crown Prince Hassan several times during this period and visited Jordan on many occasions. One such occasion was King Hussein's Silver Jubilee, at which time Jansen interviewed His Majesty and was presented with a Silver Jubilee medal by the King. He also wrote for Middle East International, reported for The Deccan Herald of Bangalore for 15 years and contributed regular articles to the Los Angeles Times. He also contributed from his most recent base in Cyprus to the Times of India.

Jansen's published books are Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment; Zionism, Israel and Asian Nationalism; Why Robert Kennedy was Killed; and Militant Islam. He co-authored with his wife the first book on Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, The Battle of Beirut.

Jansen is survived by his wife Michael, also a journalist, and their daughter Marya, a zoologist and writer who lives with her husband in Virginia.



Britain's Prince Edward, Queen Elizabeth's third son, Saturday receives flowers from a young Jordanian girl, Hana Zabir, at the opening of British Food Week in Amman. Prince Edward is in Jordan for a three-day official visit (Reuters photo)

Prince Edward opens design expo

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prince Edward of Britain Saturday opened the British Design and Packaging Exhibition at the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman and inspected the items on display.

In remarks at the opening ceremony, Prince Edward underlined the importance of design and packaging in

marketing goods abroad.

Items on display, including machinery and equipment used in printing and packaging, were produced by local firms and Jordanian agents of British manufacturers.

The ministers of industry and trade, youth and tourism were on hand to welcome Prince Edward,

who later opened "A Taste of Britain" week at Ahlia Abella superstore. The exhibition displays a wide range of British foods.

Prince Edward, who arrived Friday on a three-day visit to Jordan, is expected to open an exhibition on Sunday celebrating the 50th anniversary of the British Council in Jordan.

Regent, Prince Edward present Crown Prince Award to students

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and Prince Edward of Britain on Saturday presented the Crown Prince Award to 75 students at the Amman Baccalaureate School.

In remarks at the presentation ceremony, the Regent said the award reflects the meaning of family, responsibility and unity, stressing that "the real picture of our country which we look forward to reflecting exists in the heart and mind."

"The prize is a bridge to a society that does not discriminate between anyone," Prince Hassan told

the ceremony, which was attended by Their Royal Highnesses Princesses Sumaya and Rahma as well as a number of ministers and senior officials.

The Regent said it is important to maintain contact with Jordanians living abroad in order to encourage them to serve their country properly.

He stressed the importance of developing education in the civil and military fields based on transparency, accountability and self-evaluation. The Regent added that development depends on the land, human resources and economy.

Prince Hassan said His Majesty King Hussein phoned him recently and

reassured him of his health. He praised the efforts of the education ministry, universities and other organisations, and the office responsible for the award to support and develop the prize.

He also called on the young generation to overcome future challenges and take responsibility for helping build Jordanian society.

The Regent suggested that the sponsors of the award evaluate it annually and send a report to him and to the prize's board.

The Crown Prince Award was established 14 years ago to recognise voluntary sport and other activities that contribute to the country's development.

Investigation under way into apparent suicide of Iraqi Feud in Madaba leaves 2 dead, 6 injured

By Rana Hussein

AMMAN — The authorities are investigating the shooting death of a 50-year-old Iraqi national, whose body was found Saturday in the back of his home in Tla'a Ali, according to official sources.

Imad A., an Iraqi businessman, was shot once in the head, the source said, adding that coroners found a gun next to the victim's body.

"Initial investigations of the murder scene point to a possible suicide," the source told the Jordan Times Saturday evening.

The source added that the victim left a note stating that he intended to commit suicide. The source would not

elaborate.

The victim's body was transferred to the National Institute for Forensic Medicine for an autopsy, the source said.

Police contacted by the Jordan Times yesterday declined comment and said they were investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, police in Madaba governorate are questioning four families, all from the same tribe in the town of Faisaliyah, following a shooting incident on Friday which left two dead and six others injured, an official source said.

A Madaba resident said the father of one of the people killed died of a heart attack on Saturday.

According to one source, the family members opened fire on each other Friday evening following an argument over old feuds. The source said some of the perpetrators used machine guns.

"The same family has been involved in continuous feuds for the past 10 years, and this is not the first time that they have fought with each other," a Madaba resident said.

Last year, the resident added, a similar feud in the same family left two people injured.

Another source said the two people killed in the incident were aged 28 and 32, adding that one of the six injured was admitted to King Hussein Medical Centre and is listed in critical condition.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jordanian expo opens in UAE

ABU DHABI (WAM) — The wife of the UAE president and chairperson of the UAE women's federation, Sheikhah Fatima Bint Mubarak, Saturday inaugurated a four-day Jordanian exhibition organised by the federation and the Queen Alia Fund. Sheikhah Fatima said the UAE and Jordan have taken great strides towards joint cooperation in social and women's work, adding that the next year would witness further development in this. Sheikhah Fatima expressed her admiration of the traditional Jordanian dresses and Islamic pottery on display. She invited the Jordanian women's delegation to visit the handicraft and environment centre at the federation's premises. Shadya Nasser, advisor of HRH Princess Basma acting executive director of the QAF, thanked Sheikhah Fatima for her patronage of the exhibition and her support for the fund's humanitarian and social activities.

Chinese delegation meets with official

AMMAN (Petra) — The head of a 15-member Chinese economic delegation Saturday said the team's visit to Jordan aims at examining the investment climate in the country and discussing prospects for bilateral cooperation. Jin Hai Ping, president of the commission of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade of Anhui Province, said the climate for investment in Jordan is particularly good in the Qualifying Industrial Zone near Irbid. Speaking during a meeting with the secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, Mohammad Halaqah, Jin noted that the balance of trade is currently in China's favour but said the "good" bilateral trade relations can be further expanded. For his part, Halaqah urged Chinese businesses to invest in the QIZ, stressing that China and Jordan could launch joint investment projects in electronics, oil shale exploitation, manufacturing and textiles.

Bilalji, Japanese team discuss tourism

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Tourism Akel Bilalji on Saturday met with a team of Japanese experts representing the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to discuss plans for promoting the tourism industry in Jordan. At the meeting, which was also attended by officials from various ministries concerned with the tourism sector, Bilalji said Jordan is currently exerting intensive efforts to promote the industry and is seeking to create an appropriate tourism investment climate for foreign investors. The Japanese team members presented recommendations for improvement based on their study of Jordan's potential and discussed measures to be taken in this regard.

Qadi meets with Sudanese minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Nayef Qadi on Saturday received his Sudanese counterpart to discuss bilateral issues. During his three-day visit, the Sudanese minister will examine Jordan's experience in matters related to police, civil defence and passports. The meeting was attended by the ministry's secretary general, Hashem Sabbagh, and other senior officials from both sides.

Following arrival in Amman from Iraq U.S. humanitarian group urges UNSCOM members to resign

AMMAN (J.T.) — An American human rights group has called on U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) members to resign from their posts as an act of conscience to protest the sanctions regime on Iraq.

"We gave a letter to UNSCOM asking them to consider resigning out of moral outrage," said Voices in the Wilderness mission leader Kathy Kelly. "They must see that they are used as the pretext of a strike against Iraq... That was never part of the cease-fire resolution, but that is what is happening now."

Members of Voices in the Wilderness, engaged in a six-year campaign to have the eight-year sanctions on Iraq, which reportedly have resulted in the death of more than half a million Iraqi children, partially or fully lifted, presented a letter to UNSCOM Deputy Director Jaakko Ylitalo during a 12-day trip to Iraq urging UNSCOM personnel to rethink their mission.

"The work of disarmament is important, yet we believe UNSCOM's efforts are being used to justify the continuation of crippling sanctions and possible military strikes," the letter said. "In our view, as long as sanctions continue their devastation on the Iraqi people, there are bound to be other crises over weapons inspections."

"There are deep divisions within the Clinton administration over the use of military force in Iraq. The resignation of one or more UNSCOM members would greatly strengthen the hand of those who advocate a diplomatic solution to this conflict," the Voices group said. "Such a public act would also focus world attention on the weapons of mass destruction that sanctions

themselves have become."

"Last month, [U.N. Assistant Secretary General] Denis Halliday resigned, as an act of conscience over sanctions... A similar resignation by an UNSCOM official could avert an apparently inevitable military attack and serve the cause of peace. We know that the courageous act of one person can positively influence the course of world events. We ask each of you to consider taking such a step."

The Voices campaign has made 18 trips to Iraq since sanctions were introduced in 1990 to bring much needed medicine and medical supplies to Iraqi hospitals. During their most recent mission, they also met Caroline Cross, special assistant to the UNSCOM director, and Hans Von Sponeck, who replaced Denis Halliday as the oil for food programme coordinator.

Halliday resigned in anger at the U.N. sanctions policy.

"Sanctions are starving to death 6,000 Iraqi infants every month," Halliday said upon his resignation in October. "And [they] are turning a whole generation against the West. I no longer want to be a part of that."

But Kelly, head of Voices' most recent initiative, said the group has returned with the impression that UNSCOM personnel believe humanitarian and moral issues do not lay within the boundaries of their mandate.

"They simply tell us that [the humanitarian aspect] is not their job," Kelly said yesterday after the group arrived in Amman from Iraq.

As with the previous 17 trips, the group returned with reports of a massive humanitarian crisis.

"Even under oil-for-food, hospitals

don't report that they have all the medicine that they need," said Ken Hanford-Ricardi. "A hospital in Basra says that they have only 30-35 per cent of the medicine they need. But even that is somewhat irrelevant because they can't maintain refrigeration and storage systems properly. In Basra, you can be without electricity for up to 12 hours a day."

U.S. laws prohibit Americans from dealing with Iraq and provide for imprisonment terms of up to 12 years or a fine of \$1 million. Although no member of any mission has been prosecuted, one has reported that her passport was confiscated — a strategy she said was later rethought — and another claimed that authorities confiscated a series of photographs of ill children and abysmal hospital conditions and footage recorded by CNN of a Voices press conference on arrival in Detroit.

The group says it believes that "U.N.-U.S." economic sanctions are raising important freedom of information and free speech issues in the U.S.

During their latest mission, which began just as the U.S. prepared to strike Iraq two weeks ago, the group said several American news organisations interviewed them and attended their tours of hospitals.

"But in the U.S., no one picked up the story," said Kelly. "We find it dangerous that there is self-censorship concerning this issue. Political powers want the people of the United States to believe that Saddam Hussein is the only person in Iraq."

"We believe that there are deliberate decisions not to show [the suffering] of Iraqis," she said. "Democracy suffers when crucial information does not reach people."

Ministry, UNESCO open 'education for all' workshop

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education Saturday opened a training workshop on "education for all" in conjunction with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The director of the ministry's General Education Department, Mahmoud Massad, said the workshop's theme conforms with a plan to highlight the role of education in combating poverty and the importance of linking vocational training with the needs of the local community and the labour market.

The workshop is in line with a 1992 UNESCO general conference held in Thailand entitled "Education for All," he added.

Massad said the ministry is working to eradicate the pockets of illiteracy among people aged 50 and above.

According to Massad, Jordan has lowered its illiteracy rate to 13 per cent over the past few years and hopes to bring it down to less than 10 per cent by 2000 through the work of nearly 400 adult education

and literacy centres around the country.

These centres have offered free education to nearly 350,000 people since the literacy programme was initiated in the early 1960s, he said.

The educational system in Jordan is not concerned solely with eradicating illiteracy but also with providing vocational training and linking it with the requirements of the labour market in order to help reduce unemployment, said Massad.

Jordan is currently implementing the third phase of a plan for developing education that addresses issues related to protecting children from abuse and disease and offers them help in acquiring necessary skills, he added.

According to Massad, the ministry provides opportunities for drop-outs to reach an educational level equivalent to the sixth grade, but learners can also pursue secondary education and obtain tawjihi certificates, a prerequisite for higher education.

The Editor and Staff of the Jordan Times mourn the passing of their friend and colleague

Godfrey Jansen

May his soul rest in peace.

what's going on

CONCERT

* German film "Die Winterreise" (The Winter Trip) — (with subtitles in English) at the National Music Conservatory on Monday Nov. 30 at 8:00 p.m.

* "Bob le flambeur" at the French Cultural Centre, Jabel Weibdeh, on Monday Nov. 30 at 6:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

PLAY

* "Kind Chemo" (in Arabic) at Hassan Ibn Talal Auditorium, University of Jordan at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Oil paintings by Ali Najjar at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman, until Dec. 14.

* The Tenth Anniversary Exhibition of Contemporary Arab Artists at Darat Al Funun, Jabel Weibdeh (Tel. 4643251/2), until Jan. 28.

* Paintings by Farouq Hassan at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uthaina (Tel. 5526932), until Nov. 29.

* Photography exhibition entitled "Windows and Doors" by Hani Hourani at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 5537598), until Dec. 18.

* Display of Jordan River Foundation (JRF) 1998 autumn/winter collection entitled "Falling Leaves" at the JRF showroom, Jabel Amman (Tel. 4613081), until Nov. 30.

India's Congress hammers BJP in state polls

NEW DELHI (R) — India's Congress party swept to electoral victory in three key states Sunday, raising the prospect of a power struggle with the Hindu nationalist-led central government.

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi said she was in no hurry to oust the coalition government of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which lost control of two bastion states and failed to wrest control of another.

With most of the ballots from last Wednesday's polls in four states counted, Congress had won three-quarters of the assembly seats in Delhi and the western state of Rajasthan and clinched a majority in the central state of Madhya Pradesh.

Although the elections in four states have no direct bearing on the central government, speculation mounted that some of the eight-month-old coalition's partners could lose confidence in the BJP and jump ship.

The BJP's parliamentary leaders began a conclave at 3:30 p.m. (1000 GMT) and were due to meet their allies later.

The Congress Working Committee planned to plot

its next moves later in the day, but Gandhi made it clear that her party would tread carefully.

"... My personal feeling is that we ought not to rush into certain situations, we have to consider the situation properly," she told New Delhi Television. "We don't need to boast about this, I think we have to get down to work now."

Jairam Ramesh, secretary of the Congress economic group, said the polls had brought a "very strong anti-BJP vote" because of the soaring prices of essential commodities.

Anger over prices of staples like onions and potatoes overshadowed last May's nuclear tests, earlier thought to be a powerful political card for the BJP.

Ramesh told a World Economic Forum luncheon meeting that Congress was in no position to form an alternative government from the fragmented ranks of the lower house of parliament.

"We don't believe Congress party is now in a position to bring down the government. Our political reading is that we should come to power in a clean manner," Ramesh said.

Congress won 51 of the 69 seats in the 70-member

Delhi assembly for which voting took place, with the BJP at 15. In Rajasthan, it won 150 of the 195 seats and the BJP took just 33.

In Madhya Pradesh, Congress took 163 of 320 seats at stake.

In Mizoram, the fourth state where elections were held last Wednesday, the Congress lost to two regional parties. But the state is not considered crucial in national politics.

Parliament's winter session opens Monday and the Congress is getting strong signals from the Communists, who also bitterly oppose the Hindu nationalist BJP, for a coordinated move to turn the heat up on the fragile coalition.

Home (interior) Minister Lal Krishna Advani told reporters in the southern city of Madras that voters had voted against the state governments, not the centre.

"The verdict is certainly a matter which needs introspection and corrective action," he said. "The BJP government at the centre has performed well but because of various factors, the exorbitant rise in prices of essential commodities, it has affected the mood of the people."



Garlanded Sonia Gandhi, president of India's main opposition Congress party, stands with supporters at her residence in New Delhi. The Congress party, eyeing a political comeback, swept to power in two key states and held on to its reins in another in the assembly elections held last week in four states (Reuters photo)

Feeding Third World cities alarms United Nations

ROME (AFP) — The inexorable spread of cities in the developing world is causing severe problems of keeping the population fed, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) says in its latest annual report.

For example, Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, has 1,300 new mouths to fill every day, the United Nations body says, adding that those who flood to the cities in search for a better life do not often find it.

By 2005 the world's urban population will have exceeded those living in rural areas, and in the next 20 years 93 per cent of that population's growth will be in the Third World.

In 2000, the world will have 20 cities of 10 million people or more. Six are on the American continent (New York, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires), two in Africa (Lagos and Cairo), and 12 in Asia (Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul, Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Manila, Dhaka, Calcutta, New Delhi, Karachi and Bombay).

By 2015 there will be half-a-dozen more (Hangzhou, Jakarta, Hyderabad, Lahore, Tehran and Istanbul). Apart from the last, which is half in Europe, all are in Asia.

Such a megapolopolis

requires 6,000 tonnes of food a day, the FAO said, involving coordination between producers, transporters, wholesalers and distributors, including retail shops, street sellers and markets.

But it warned that while the cities were expanding the infrastructure was not keeping up. With the urban area of developing countries doubling in 10 to 15 years, the result would be an anarchic and illegal construction, shanty towns, overcrowding, corruption, sickness from poor sanitary conditions and inflation due to the increase in middlemen.

According to World Bank estimates, the number of impoverished city dwellers will mushroom from 400 million in 1990 to one billion in 2000.

Such poor households can spend between 60 per cent and 80 per cent of their income just on feeding themselves. This is 30 per cent more than rural families, and their diet is inferior, the FAO said.

Attracted by the hope of a better life in one or two generations, as well as enjoying benefits like running water, sanitation and health services, country dwellers who move to the city can equally well find themselves far from markets, without transport and

eating contaminated food in overcrowded conditions.

While private enterprise and individuals sell and distribute food, municipal authorities tend to provide the roads, warehouses and market facilities.

But much of this infrastructure is badly sited, costly and unfit for its purpose, the FAO said.

In Africa, for instance, wholesale markets are often stuck on the edge of towns and lack the basic equipment needed. The result is goods stolen or lost, unhealthy conditions, and no refrigeration.

Grain is often piled up in the open air and losses reach unacceptable levels.

In Asia or Latin America on the other hand city centre markets pollute the environment with their waste, and surrounding roads are blocked by delivery trucks.

Almost everywhere wholesalers form cosy cartels which enable them to charge exorbitant prices, the FAO report said.

It stressed the important role played by small markets and street vendors, which create employment and provide a service to the poorest inhabitants.

In Caracas, for instance, produce bought on the street represents 20 to 25 per cent of household expenditure on food.

Zemin wraps up Japan visit overshadowed by war history

SAPPORO, Japan (AFP) — Chinese President Jiang Zemin Sunday wrapped up a landmark visit to Japan which was marred by his failure to get a written apology for Tokyo's wartime atrocities.

The Chinese leader spent his last full day in Japan visiting a monument to great Chinese writer Lu Xun in the city of Sendai and meeting with agriculture experts in this snow-covered capital of northern Hokkaido Island.

But his focus on farming and culture to round off his landmark six-day visit was heavily overshadowed by the brutal 1937-45 Japanese aggression in China.

Jiang had been pushing hard for a full, written apology from Japan to mark his trip — the first by a Chinese president since the two Asian powers reestablished diplomatic ties in 1972 — but he received only a verbal apology for Japan's aggression at his Tokyo summit Thursday with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi.

A written joint declaration issued after the summit mentioned Japan's "deep remorse" but failed to offer a full apology.

In response, Jiang refused to let the dark history go, bringing up the subject at every public event on his schedule.

Japan should "guide the nation and young generations with correct views of history and never allow a repeat of the ideology or force of militarism," he told students at Tokyo's Waseda University

Saturday.

At a weekend news conference, he accused "certain people in high positions" in Japan of "distorting history and trying to gloss over the country's past aggression."

China says 20 million people died as a result of the 1937-45 occupation. The 1937 Nanjing massacre alone killed 140,000 people, according to Allied trials of Japanese war criminals.

Japan's extreme rightists, who deny the Nanjing massacre took place, held vocal protests through the trip, although none got past heavy security which was enforced by 10,000 extra Japanese police for the visit.

Ironically, it was left-wing demonstrators who faced off with the Chinese leader, interrupting his university speech with anti-nuclear protests before being dragged off by security guards.

Jiang's other main objective during the visit had been to secure a strong statement on Taiwan, laying out Japan's support for China's policy of no Taiwan independence, no two Chinas (China and Taiwan) and no Taiwan joining international organisations as a sovereign state.

Instead, Beijing merely got a restatement of Japan's promise not to recognise Taiwan as a separate state. China regards the island as a renegade province.

The Chinese president's visit focused only on the past and the Taiwan issue and failed

to expand discussion on the Asian crisis and international affairs," the Nihon Keizai Shimbun said Sunday.

"Japan and China will aim for new relations in the 21st century, leaving various touchy issues untouched," the daily added.

Jiang left the Japanese capital late Saturday and travelled north by train to Sendai to trace Chinese writer Lu Xun's voyage of nearly a century ago.

Lu (1881-1936), one of China's most influential authors and social reformers, came to Japan in 1902 to study medicine at the Sendai Medical School.

Jiang also visited Tohoku university and presented officials with a poem he wrote the night before about Sendai before boarding his Air China Boeing 747 for Sapporo.

Boisterous school children waving Chinese and Japanese flags welcomed him to this sleepy city and Jiang broke from his scheduled agenda to walk over to the youngsters and greet them in Japanese.

He then toured farms in the region and met agriculture experts involved in plans to set up an agricultural science research centre in China which is aimed at boosting grain yield with fewer damaging chemicals and pesticides.

The Chinese president, accompanied by his wife Wang Yeping, returns home Monday after a farewell banquet later Sunday hosted by Sapporo officials.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Congo rebel political chief refutes peace pact

KABALO, DR Congo (AFP) — The political leader of the DRC's rebels, Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, Sunday refuted a peace agreement reached in Paris among countries involved in the conflict. Wamba told AFP that he did not recognise the validity of the verbal agreement among President Laurent Kabila and foreign nations caught up on rival sides in the insurrection in the DRC. The president of the rebels' political wing, the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD), cast strong doubts on a pact meant to pave the way for full-fledged peace accords next month because the DRC insurgents themselves were not a party to it. "We don't think an agreement can be reached on the DRC crisis without involving us, because otherwise the signatories risk having a problem in implementing their accord on the ground," Wamba said. Speaking by satellite telephone from Bunia, in the northeast Orientale province, he nevertheless said that he hoped that the RCD would be contacted about the accord, announced Saturday at the end of a major France-Africa summit also attended by U.N. chief Kofi Annan.

4-year-old boy emerges unscathed in India's train wreck

KHANNA, India (AP) — Police are calling it a miracle: a four-year-old boy was rescued from the wreckage of a train pileup in northern India, with no injuries to his body even after the train coach was crushed like a ball of paper. "It's a miracle. What else can we call it," said police officer Randev Singh Hodal, after workers found Shubham crying in the tangled mass of the Sealdah Express at this northwestern town in the state of Punjab. The express train slammed into the derailed coaches of the Frontier Mail Thursday. "We heard a voice in the wreckage," Hodal said in an interview Saturday night. Several hours after the accident, workers using acetylene torches carefully cut through the wreckage. They found Shubham crouched under broken wooden blocks that had formed a tent over him. His parents, grandparents and two aunts all were dead. The family was returning to New Delhi from a pilgrimage to a Hindu shrine in Jammu, capital of the northern state of Jammu-Kashmir when the accident occurred on a foggy morning. "The boy was crying nonstop. He kept saying, 'Take me to my papa. I want my mother.' How do we tell him that his parents are dead?" Hodal said. Shubham has since been in a state of shock and rarely speaks, he said. Police teams found about the family after contacting neighbours in New Delhi. They are now trying to trace relatives. Photographs of the child were shown on national television so that his near relatives could claim him. "We are proceeding very, very cautiously. We don't want false claimants," the officer said. The child is in the care of a police officer's family.

Antarctic explorers pass site where Robert Scott died

SYDNEY (AFP) — Three Antarctic adventurers retracing the footsteps of polar explorer Robert Scott, 87 years after his historic and fatal expedition to the South Pole and back, have passed the site where he died. Since leaving Scott Base on Nov. 4, Peter Hillary, Eric Phillips and Jon Muir have covered more than 300 kilometres on foot of their 2,804 kilometre trek. The passed the site of Scott's death Friday, expedition organisers said. It is the first time anyone has followed exactly the route taken by the 1911 expedition. "We think a lot about Scott. We feel very strongly that he and his group were a very committed party," said Hillary, son of Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to climb Everest. Each of the team is hauling a sled loaded with more than 150 kilograms of food, cooking fuel and equipment. They have left quantities of food and cooking fuel at each of the two depots they have established so far on the pole-ward leg of the journey, to be collected on their return to Scott Base. "We have had to endure temperatures as cold as minus 15 degrees Celsius, a screaming blizzard which forced us into the tent for a day, and sastrugi (snow ridges on the ice) which have made our progress slower than expected," Hillary was quoted as saying by expedition organisers, speaking to reporters in Australia from Scott Base. "But we have had some good days and as we leave each depot our load lightens and we can travel faster." The team have been keeping their spirits up by speaking to their families on the satellite phones they are carrying. They aim to be at the South Pole for Christmas Day, but first have to traverse the crevasse-riddled Shackleton Glacier.

China building longest bridge on Yangtze River

BEIJING (AP) — China is building its longest bridge over its longest river, the Yangtze. The 2.6 billion yuan (\$314 million) bridge under intensive construction in the city of Wuhu, in eastern China's Anhui province, will have a 6-kilometre-long highway section and a 10-kilometre-long train section, the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported Sunday. When it goes into operation in 2000, it will shorten the route between Beijing and Xiamen, a special economic zone on the southeastern coast, by 800 kilometres. The government is increasing spending on infrastructure to keep the overall economic growth rate strong. The nation's total investment in the first nine months of this year was 1.1 trillion yuan (\$131 billion), an increase of 20 per cent over the same period in 1997, Xinhua said in a separate report Sunday. Investment in capital construction was 625.8 billion yuan (\$71 billion), up 21 per cent over the first nine months of 1997.

Fleeing a degraded habitat, turtles invade fruit orchards

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) — Flooding stripped forests and chemically tainted rivers, turtles by the tens of thousands have invaded fruit orchards southwest of Bangkok where they are falling prey to hunters, a newspaper said Sunday. "They hide in the undergrowth and tall grass to escape sunlight during the daytime and come out at night in droves to look for food," one orchard owner, Preecha Pukabutr, told the Bangkok Post. The 60-year-old Preecha said he had recently found some 50 freshwater turtles of different sizes and species in just one 10-metre-square area of his orchard. The "invasion" started nearly a year ago, but in recent months it has reportedly attracted hunters from other provinces who Preecha said trespassed on the orchards to ferret out the turtles for sale to restaurant owners. He said the hunters, arriving in pick-up trucks, normally came at night, poking into the undergrowth with long bamboo poles. Some also stole fruit from the orchards in Samut Songkram Province, sparking threats by owners that they would be shot. While locals normally don't eat turtles, they are a popular item Bangkok restaurants catering to tourists from Taiwan, Hong Kong, China and South Korea who believe turtle meat improves sexual performance. Charuchin Natheepaphas, a reptile expert at the National Science Museum Organisation, recently said the turtle migration indicated there was something terrible afoot in the traditional habitat of these animals. He cited chemical pollution in the Mae Klong River and massive deforestation in areas northwest of Samut Songkram. "Turtles are very sensitive to changes in water quality," he said, adding they were important to riverine ecology, helping to keep the water clean by feeding on dead vegetation. The expert said habitat destruction and hunting had brought some species to the brink of extinction.

Researchers identify 142 million-year-old flowering plant fossil

WASHINGTON (AP) — Researchers believe they have discovered fossil evidence of the world's oldest flower, at 142 million years: a spindly twig with peapod-shaped fruit and a woody stem that looks nothing like a rose, an apple blossom or a daisy.

The fossil is from an early evolutionary stage when plants were just developing the flowering system that later evolved into fruit, grain, brilliantly coloured and fragrant flowers and food for many animals, said David Dilcher, a University of Florida biology professor.

"It would have been a very different world if early flowering plants like this one had not been successful," said Dilcher, co-author of a study

in a recent edition of the journal Science.

"There would have been no apples, no Wheaties in the morning, no corn on the cob, no potatoes, no rice or other grains."

All of the common plant food sources came into existence after plants evolved the ability to make flowers that attracted insects and other pollinators and then grew into fruit.

The flowering plant fossil was found in a rock formation of limestone and volcanic ash layers in China, near the town of Beipiao, about 250 miles northeast of Beijing. The rock beds were once on the bottom of a lake that periodically was showered with volcanic ash, Dilcher said.

Plants and animals that sank to the lake bottom became covered with sediment and turned into fossils.

Villagers digging in the fossil beds have unearthed dinosaurs, insects, birds and plants from millions of years ago, but this is the first time a flowering plant has been uncovered.

The discovery has been age-dated at 142 million years by Chinese scientists, Dilcher said. The oldest previously known flowering plant was about 130 million years old. Chinese researchers, including the researcher who found the fossil, asked Dilcher to analyse it.

The ancient plant lacks the petals and shape that most people associate with flowers.

"It doesn't have any beautiful or showy flowers, but it is a flowering plant because it has fruit that enclose seeds," said Dilcher.

Botanists hailed the discovery as an important advance in understanding how plants evolved.

"To the world of botany, it's a discovery of the same scale as understanding the details of why the dinosaurs became extinct," said William L. Crepet, a Cornell University professor.

The plant specimen is about 7.6 centimetres long, with two parts that appear to be joined branches. Along the branches are what appear to be paired leaves. But Dilcher said the whole thing, branches and leaves, is actually a flower.

That is because some of the leaves are closed, like peapods, and contain seeds. The peapods are considered the fruit of the flower, he said.

Indeed, the plant "may have been the first evolutionary experiment in enclosing seeds and trying to attract pollinators," Dilcher said.

Plants first developed seeds some 350 million years ago. Developing flowers and attracting insect pollinators was the next great leap in plant evolution, and eventually in animal evolution, he said.

Plants, in effect, evolved ways to enlist the cooperation of animals to reproduce. They developed ways to attract pollinators, such as bees. They developed ways to have seeds

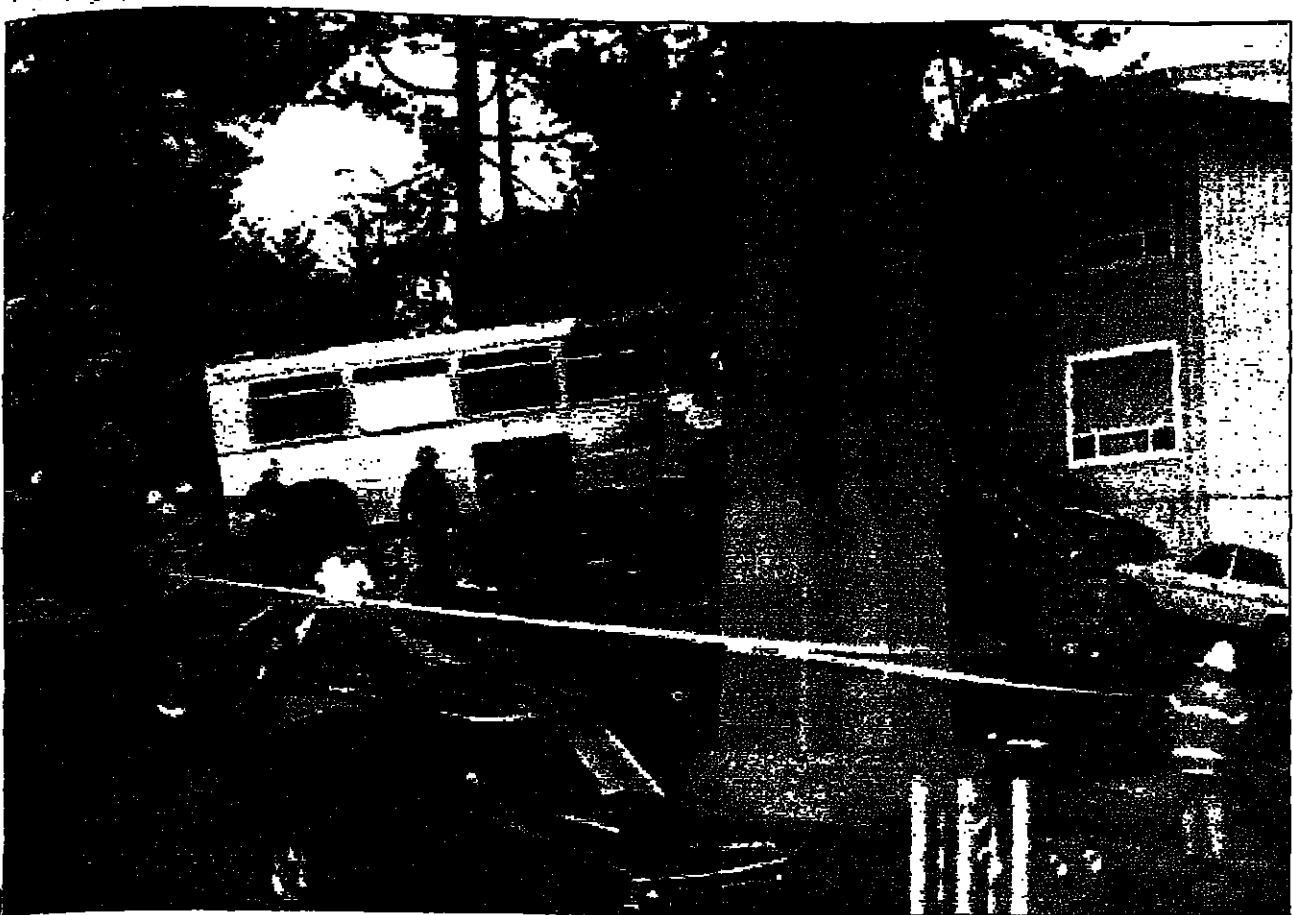
transported by making fruit, such as apples, that were eaten by animals who then dropped the seeds elsewhere.

"Flowering plants were the first advertisers in the world," said Dilcher. "They managed to gain the cooperation of animals by learning to say 'Hey, I smell good. I've got a reward for you. Come and visit me.'"

Plants reached the stage of having bright blossoms, sweet fragrance and flowing nectar about 55 million years ago, some 90 million years after the Chinese flower fossil.

"These changes all came in progressive steps," said Dilcher. "They helped flowering plants become the most successful of all of the plants."

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Seattle Fire Department rescue workers look for survivors under a King County Metro bus that plunged off of the Aurora Bridge in Seattle after its bus driver was shot in the arm by a passenger (Reuters photo)

City bus falls off Seattle bridge after driver shot

SEATTLE (AP) — A passenger on a city bus shot the driver in the arm Friday, causing the bus carrying at least 35 people to crash off a bridge and plunge onto an apartment building, police said.

The driver was thrown from the bus and killed, and a second man, who was shot in the head, died at Harborview Medical Center, said police spokeswoman Christine Lynn Bonner.

"Possibly this is our suspect, possibly it's another victim shot by the suspect," Bonner said.

Injured passengers lay on the street, many critically injured with broken bones and bleeding wounds.

The bus tumbled from the Aurora Bridge, which crosses Seattle's Ship Canal, about 15 metres down onto the apartment building and came to rest in front of the building.

Fire Department spokeswoman Sheila Strehle said the 30 passengers were taken to six area hospitals.

Strehle said two passengers remained in critical condition Friday night and others suffered injuries rang-

ing from minor arm pain to a broken neck and internal injuries.

No one on the ground or in the apartment building was injured.

Firefighters searched the area around and beneath the bus, but no other victims were reported.

A handgun was recovered from one of the injured people at Harborview, but police did not know if it belonged to the shooter. Bonner said the handgun was not found with the man who died.

"They did find a firearm on somebody in the emergency room, but I don't believe it had been fired," said Harborview Medical Center spokeswoman Tina Mankowski.

A passenger approached the bus driver and shot him as the bus was southbound, headed toward downtown, Bonner said.

The driver lost control and the bus crossed the northbound lanes and struck a van and a light pole before plunging through the guardrail, Bonner said. The person driving the van was shaken but not injured.

The bus landed mostly in

the yard of the two-story apartment house on the hillside beneath the bridge, though the building's roof was damaged.

Firefighters were seen crawling among the wreckage of the bus' two sections, and performing first aid on a victim — believed to be the bus driver — atop the apartment's roof. The driver was apparently thrown from the bus onto the roof.

Victims, some of them dazed and bleeding, could be seen below the bridge.

Dave Chacon, who was staying in the apartment building that was hit, said he was standing on a porch directly underneath the bridge. The bus flew right overhead.

"We were outside talking, heard a noise, looked up and saw this bus coming," he said. "I looked up and saw some big chunks (of concrete railing) coming right at me."

Sara Krause was grazed by a piece of falling concrete. People from the bus "were moaning and screaming," she said. "I saw legs and twisted bodies." The city's Fremont district is located beneath the bridge. It

is a densely populated neighbourhood of homes, apartments, shops and restaurants.

"This is a busy, urban neighbourhood," said Judy Junli, who was getting mail from her porch when the accident occurred.

Chinese leader ignores protests to ram home Japan history lesson

TOKYO (AFP) — Chinese President Jiang Zemin was confronted by rowdy protesters here Saturday as he relentlessly hammered home to Japanese students the history of Tokyo's notorious war-time acts.

Japan should "guide the nation and young generations with correct views of history and never allow a repeat of the ideology or force of militarism," he told students at Tokyo's Waseda University.

The Chinese leader later gave the same message to a news conference, tracking the course set since he received only a verbal apology at his landmark summit Thursday with Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi.

A written joint declaration issued after the summit mentioned Japan's "deep remorse" but failed to offer a proper apology. Neither of the leaders signed the statement.

Japan's occupation of China remains a thorn in ties. The two countries formally resumed diplomatic ties in 1972, but Jiang's state visit is the first by a Chinese president.

Jiang travelled to the northern city of Sendai by "bullet" train late Saturday to trace bilateral history in a different

light. He will move farther north to Sapporo Sunday before leaving Monday to end the six-day visit.

He was to pay homage to Lu Xun, reputedly the most influential writer and social critic in modern China, who studied at a medical school in Sendai nearly a century ago.

But the day was marred by confrontation. As Jiang told students that "35 million Chinese soldiers and people were killed or injured" by Japanese militarists, a protester held up a banner saying "Against Cooperation with the Chinese Government" and shouted the slogan.

Six security guards ploughed through students to drag him out of the university hall balcony and down to the basement, said U.S. graduate student Alan Pardee, who was nearby.

About two minutes later, another demonstrator on the balcony held up a banner and began shouting but was almost immediately dragged out by guards.

"After the second guy was dragged away you could still hear fighting at the back of the auditorium because he was throwing punches and kicking the security men," added Pardee.

A police official said "three

students suspected of being extreme Marxist-Leninist activists have been arrested" after the incident on suspicion of trespass and disrupting public order.

Jiang said he had a special responsibility to speak of Japan's dark history.

"When I was even younger than you, I personally experienced the suffering of a crisis of our people and a devastation of our country," the Chinese leader told the audience, which included Japan's premier, a graduate of the university.

"As an eye-witness, I am responsible for telling the fact to younger generations. We have to face up to the sad events."

China says 20 million people died as a result of the 1937-45 occupation. The 1937 Nanjing massacre alone killed 140,000 people, according to Allied trials of Japanese war criminals.

At the news conference, the Chinese leader accused "certain people in high positions" in Japan of distorting history and trying to gloss over the past aggression.

Asked why the joint declaration with Japan was unsigned, Jiang said: "We have many documents with other countries which are not signed ... it does not matter

whether it is signed or not." The Chinese leader said Beijing would "strictly fulfil" the spirit of the declaration.

In a 30-minute meeting at the Akasaka guest house, the emperor expressed satisfaction with Jiang's visit. Jiji Press reported.

"I am glad that Japan and China had good talks," he said, without making any reference to the lack of formal apology over Japan's war aggression to China.

Jiang had also sought a strong statement on Taiwan from his summit here, laying out Japan's support for China's "Three Nos" policy of no Taiwan independence, no two Chinas (China and Taiwan) and no Taiwan joining international organisations as a sovereign state.

Instead, Beijing merely got a restatement of Japan's promise not to recognise Taiwan as a separate state. China regards the island as a renegade province.

On the economy, Jiang told business leaders during lunch that China had "withstood pressure, paid the price" by not devaluing the yuan so as to help Asian economies recover.

Japan, as the main industrialised nation in Asia, should do more, he said.

Opposition Congress Party takes early lead in crucial provincial elections

NEW DELHI, India (AP) —

The governing Bharatiya Janata Party was headed for a rout in legislative elections in key states Saturday, an apparent rebuke by the public for the 8-month-old Hindu nationalist government.

The outcome has no bearing on the federal government of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. But a serious loss of prestige could shake confidence in his shaky 19-party coalition and embolden the opposition Congress Party to try to unseat him if it wins enough defectors from the ruling alliance.

Early results and trends showed the Congress Party ousting the sitting BJP government in the important states of New Delhi and Rajasthan, where it may win as many as three-fourths of the assembly seats in each state.

The battle was closer in the Congress-ruled central state of Madhya Pradesh, but first results indicated Congress surprisingly would hold on to the state government.

Regional parties were poised to dislodge the ruling Congress Party in the remote, northeastern state of Mizoram. But the contest was deemed less important because the BJP did not contest it.

More than 600 seats were contested in the four

states in the voting Wednesday by about 5,000 candidates from dozens of political parties.

"The results are surprising. If the trends continue, it is definitely a win for the Congress," admitted V.K. Malhotra, a member of the federal parliament and a senior leader of the BJP, on the private STAR television network.

The BJP tried to distance the results from national politics, but Congress called it a vote of disapproval on a national scale.

A painful increase in the price of vegetables and staple foods hurt the BJP in the weeks before the election, wiping out any remaining credit it may have earned for its highly popular decision to conduct nuclear explosions last May.

An early winner in New Delhi was Sheila Dixit, who will become chief minister.

"This is a massive negative vote against the BJP. The voters are running away from them," Congress Party joint secretary Jairam Ramesh said on the private STAR television network.

The BJP shrugged off suggestions that the outcome would indicate discontent with Vajpayee's government.

"These elections are state elections. The results will not have any effect on the Vajpayee govern-

ment," BJP spokesman Venkaiah Naidu said. "My government is stable. I don't expect any political fallout."

But Salman Khursheed, a Congress leader, claimed the results had national implications. "This can't be put aside as a local issue," he said. "This is an approval signal from the people."

The election was the first political test for the BJP since it took office eight months ago.

But it also was a key electoral test for the Congress Party's new leader, Sonia Gandhi, widow of slain former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and torchbearer of the dynasty that gave India three prime ministers.

Congress has said it will not make an immediate attempt to topple the government when Parliament convenes Monday for a three-week winter session. But it has said it would not "shirk the responsibility" if Vajpayee's coalition collapsed on its own.

Gandhi has focused on rebuilding the Congress Party since she emerged from seclusion early this year to campaign in national elections. She was later named president of the party that was once led by her husband, his mother Indira Gandhi, and Indira's father Jawaharlal Nehru.

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Valuable insight for the future

DURING THE past year, Jordan has passed through some of its most trying months in its modern history, and from these experiences, the leadership has called on every Jordanian, through His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's Speech from the Throne, to extract valuable lessons from them and act accordingly.

The first lesson we must learn is how terribly awry things can go when any person or group becomes so entrenched behind an argument or cause that he or she can no longer hear an opposing voice. The tensions that arose over last year's parliamentary elections are an example of that. Although it is lamentable that important voices in society now find themselves outside the official political arena, the new dialogue is a promising adventure. It is hoped that all concerned parties of the national dialogue will bear in mind Prince Hassan's advice that "dialogue is not meant to be an exercise in futile argumentation...[but] a sophisticated instrument to benefit from the aspirations of our citizens, their creativity and their grand insights." No party should miss the opportunity to turn the dialogue into a successful exercise to benefit the nation.

All the political and socio-economic rifts of the last year peaked at a highly sensitive time for Jordan, and while no one doubts that all Jordanians are united in defence of their country, we should not give any party within or outside our borders even the slightest opportunity to disrupt our sacred, hard-earned unity.

Prince Hassan's speech emphasised cooperation and civil society as the tools by which we can best serve our national interests. This requires that the government support our trade and professional unions, political parties and media, and that our civil society institutions, in turn, support the principle of pluralism within their own ranks no matter how distasteful some ideologies may be to others. It demands that all sides recognise that none has an absolute curb on which path is right for our future, but that all bear responsibility in building that path with unique contributions.

"Public interest is the ultimate goal of government," Prince Hassan said. "Cooperation within the context of pluralism, diversity and the participation of civil society are the best means for serving our goals and interests."

This has always been the call of the Hashemite leadership: to build a modern and progressive country, and through this drive we become unbreakable.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AI Ra'i's Fahed Fanek criticised the Palestinian opposition, safely living abroad, for launching slogans calling for the complete liberation of the occupied lands and the eviction of the Israelis from Palestine. He said that though the demands are understandable, no more than what all Palestinians want, such slogans are mere wishful thinking, and will always remain figments of the imagination. Hard-line and fervent patriotic statements serve only Israel who will use them as an excuse to expand settlements and evict more Palestinians. The Palestinian National Authority is in a difficult position because they have to make concessions to Israel on basic Palestinian demands, said Fanek. One Palestinian opposition official had lashed out at Arafat and challenged him to liberate Jerusalem, but, though it may be true that Arafat is unable to regain Jerusalem, said Fanek, the way ahead is in supporting him, not in pulling him down.

AI Dustour's Oreib Rintawi said Israel has no easy way out from its south Lebanon dilemma where scores of Israeli soldiers are being killed. According to the Israeli leader, the Jewish state has only two choices, either to withdraw without a security agreement, or to go as far as the Israeli extremists prefer, namely a massive military offensive. But unilateral withdrawal means defeat, which may be indefensible in the face of the big Israeli troop losses, said Rintawi. On the other hand, a military offensive against Lebanon will surely have a negative impact on the peace process, and will snuff out any hope of peace with Lebanon and Syria, something most Israelis would not accept, added the writer, who claimed that most of Israelis prefer a unilateral withdrawal.

Is Wye economically sound?

ACCORDING TO "Washington Report on Middle East Affairs" most of the face-to-face negotiations during the nine difficult days at Maryland's Wye Plantation, October 15-23, were between Americans and Israelis. The Palestinians had made their concessions before they arrived, and Yasser Arafat stoically ignored Benjamin Netanyahu's attempts to anger him. President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright acted as a tag team, with one starting as the other left off with the Israelis. His Majesty King Hussein was called upon to help. Finally an agreement was reached in Wye and signed in the White House.

The Wye Plantation agreement is mainly of a political and strategic nature, yet its economic dimensions cannot altogether be ignored. No one in the Middle East would judge the agreement and accept it or reject it based on its economic merits, be they positive or negative. For better or worse, in this part of the world, politics comes first, economics last.

From a political standpoint, the agree-

ment means that the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track is not dead and ready for burial. The process proved to be resilient, and all the extremists' attempts, on both sides, to kill the process have failed so far.

From a strategic point of view, the agreement means that the Likud Party, after wasting much time, have finally accepted the Oslo accords, and the hand-over of more land to the Palestinian [National] Authority (PNA) means that the concept of Greater Israel is dead, and that Palestinian land can no longer be annexed.

On the economic front, Israel is expected to receive a handsome amount of money from the United States, maybe as high as one billion dollars, to cover the assumed costs of Israeli military withdrawal. The PNA will receive a smaller amount of money, and more from other donor countries which may respond positively to an American appeal for financial contributions.

Jordan, however, is not a party to the Wye Plantation agreement, even though His Majesty The King contributed to its

Sunday's Economic Pulse



Dr. Fahed Fanek

successful conclusion, using his influence with all parties. Yet Jordan will benefit economically in more than one way.

First, everything that is directly, good and beneficial for the PNA, is indirectly good and beneficial for Jordan. The opposite is equally true.

Second, the successful implementation of the agreement will be followed by the lifting of obstacles and easing of restrictions imposed against Jordanian exports, whether these restrictions are of Israeli or Palestinian origin.

Third, the financial aid package to Israel and the PNA, which the American administration will submit to the Congress for approval, will benefit Jordan as well.

The greatest benefit of the agreement is that we escaped the consequences of a possible failure, which would have resulted in grave developments in the West Bank and Gaza, with a spillover in Jordan.

This unhappy outcome was at times very likely. The Israeli delegation threatened twice to break off the talks, which could have meant an uprising and a breakout of violence in the West Bank and Gaza that might have spread all over the region.

There can be 'no first use'

By Gwynne Dyer

BACK IN JUNE, after India and Pakistan had shaken the world by testing nuclear weapons, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright warned them that they were making a dreadful mistake. "Don't rush to embrace what the rest of the world is racing to leave behind," she said. "Don't assume that you're the only countries on earth that are immune to miscalculation. There is no point worth making, no interest worth securing, that can possibly justify the risk." How odd, then, that on 13 November the United States voted against a resolution in the U.N. disarmament committee calling on the existing nuclear powers to "demonstrate an unequivocal commitment" to getting rid of their weapons by fast-tracking negotiations for nuclear disarmament. Washington certainly isn't racing to leave its nuclear weapons behind. It's run-of-the-mill hypocrisy, scarcely worthy of comment — except that of America's fifteen NATO allies, twelve of which are in the U.N. vote.

Only Britain, and France, which are fellow nuclear powers equally determined to hang onto their status symbols, and Turkey, which is currying U.S. diplomatic support on other issues, joined Washington in voting against the resolution. This was an unprecedented breach of NATO unity, but there is more to come. The two ring leaders in the revolt against U.S. determination to hang onto its nukes forever, Germany and Canada, are also moving towards an open campaign to drop NATO's policy of 'nuclear first use', a policy as old as the Cold War itself. The U.S. and NATO have always reserved the right of 'first use': to be the first to launch a nuclear strike in a crisis. The implication is that this would be done in response to a non-nuclear attack by somebody else (traditionally, the Soviet Union), but they deliberately keep the language vague to maximise uncertainty about what they would actually do if attacked. This had a certain crude logic when NATO's conventional forces were smaller than those of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact in Europe. NATO's nuclear first-use policy saved its members the greater cost and voter resistance that would have been involved in matching the Soviet Union soldier for soldier (though at the cost of making nuclear war more likely in any confrontation in

Europe). But the Soviet Union is gone now, and Russia's conventional forces are so shrunken and demoralised that they could not even conquer Chechnya. It would seem an ideal time for NATO to scrap this bizarre threat to start using nuclear weapons in the heart of densely-populated Europe — or anywhere else, for that matter.

Where NATO actually expected to use most of its 'tactical' nuclear weapons, for forty years, was in

'Washington isn't racing to leave its nuclear weapons behind. It's run-of-the-mill hypocrisy'

among the towns and villages of Germany. This always made the prospective blast and radiation victims in those towns and villages a bit uneasy, so it's no great surprise that the government of reunited Germany has been the first NATO member to break ranks openly on this issue. Once Helmut Kohl's long-ruling conservative government lost power in the October elections, the change came at once. Last month's 50-page coalition pact between the Social Democrats and the Greens included a promise that the new government "will campaign to lower the alert status of nuclear weapons and for a renunciation of the first use of nuclear weapons." This left Washington foaming with indignation: "We believe the Germans are using flawed logic and phoney arguments," said a senior State Department official. The German foreign office snapped right back: "The security and military situation has changed so radically in recent years that the time is right for a policy of 'no first use'." It belongs in the NATO review (of nuclear weapons policy) and we want to push it at the April summit."

By the time of NATO's 50th anniversary summit in Washington, the pressures for 'no first use' may have grown even greater. Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy asked the House of Commons foreign affairs committee to review nuclear policy two full years ago, and the report, due in early December, will further undermine the status quo. Leaked reports in Ottawa suggest that it will seek an end to NATO's first-use policy, call for the removal of American nuclear weapons from Europe, and advocate the de-arming of all nuclear weapons (that is, separating the warheads from the delivery systems).

But this is hardly radical stuff ten years after the end of the Cold War. Why does it upset official Washington so much? The official answer, couched in language of theological density, is that 'deterrence rests on uncertainty'. (Translation: if you really get us annoyed, we might go crazy and start using nuclear weapons.) Nobody really believes that NATO will go crazy like that, of course, so there is a fall-back, unofficial answer: that NATO needs its nuclear weapons, and its 'first-use' policy, to deal with the threat of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons in the hands of genuinely 'crazy states'. Only nobody really believes that either. No U.S. leader is ever going to start dropping atomic bombs on some small Third World country, ending 53 years during which nobody has used nuclear weapons in warfare, no matter what it has hidden in its labs. Air strikes, maybe; nukes, no. In practice, there is already a 'no-first-use' policy — so why in heaven's name doesn't Washington want NATO to say so? Why won't it say so itself? It would help a great deal in persuading other countries (and there is a queue stretching half-way round the block) not to go nuclear too.

A modest hypothesis. The U.S. has spent \$5.5 trillion dollars on nuclear weapons since 1945, which is enough to create a very powerful interest group both in the defence industry and in parts of the armed forces. All these people's jobs depend on nuclear weapons — and if you admit that they are practically unusable, the demand for them is likely to drop. So you must never, ever say that.

The writer is an independent London-based journalist, whose articles are published in 45 countries.

The other extradition

By Norman Stone

AN INTERESTING question: compare the fate of General Pinochet, aged 83, and Comrade "Apo" Ocalan, aged 48. Pinochet faces extradition. Ocalan, who has led the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) since its foundation 20 years ago, has waged a terrorist war in south-eastern Turkey. Of course he claims the usual indulgence for terrorism, but he has personally been charged with murder, in Germany, where four defectors from his organisation were killed.

He is wanted on a red Interpol list, at the behest of the German government. He flew to Italy, requested political asylum, and has not been made to face justice there — instead, there he sits, in a comfortable house near Rome. This is in strange contrast with British behaviour over Pinochet. The problem is that Ocalan himself is hugely complicating a difficult enough situation. The PKK claims to speak for "the Kurds", and there is in some quarters an easy acceptance of this claim. But most of his victims have been Kurds.

One of his one-time lieutenants, Selim Curukaya, wrote his memoirs (PKK — Die Diktatur des Abdullah Ocalan). Ocalan is a Communist, complete with hammer and sickle, and he runs the PKK in Stalinist style, complete with executions and purge trials.

You are not even allowed to cross your legs in his camps, says Selim Curukaya, as it might be taken as a sign of disrespect; he himself was imprisoned by Ocalan, and managed, with great difficulty, to get away, through Beirut.

Other defectors have not been so lucky, most of them Kurdish innocents.

In 1993, Ocalan broke a ceasefire, and killed 20 unarmed young conscripts in a bus. A particularly horrible case involved two young primary schoolteachers, who had gone to the southeast out of idealism — bring education to the backward east. They were killed. The newly-married wife of one

was going to be spared, but she asked to be killed as well, and the PKK obliged.

The PKK is a terrorist organisation with links to gangland and its aim is the creation of a Maoist state in areas of Turkey and Iraq. Such movements can talk the lan-

guage of "national liberation", and gain credibility in serious circles. But there is not 'A Kurdish Question': there are several.

The Kurds have had a rather tragic history. They lived scattered among four different states, and in the recent past most were nomads, with a feudal social structure. In Turkey, they are divided by religion — many are not orthodox Muslims, but Alevis, far less strict, and in the past, whenever a Kurdish rebellion occurred, they took different sides.

There is also a vast linguistic divide. According to the best anthropological account, Martin van Bruinessen's "Aga, Sheikh And State", there are seven Kurdish languages, and in Turkey the speakers of the Zaza and Kurmanji variants understand each other, if at all, only with great difficulty.

In northern Iraq, there are two chief Kurdish formations, but they, too, are divided by language, the eastern group speaking a language much influenced by

Iranian. This problem is shown by the PKK's very own television station, Med-TV, which broadcasts mainly in Turkish, and otherwise mainly uses Arabic or even Iranian. If you go round Kurdish districts, you find that, the younger the people, the more they will use Turkish among themselves.

There is a further problem — children. It is still the done thing for a man to marry four times and to produce as many children as possible: there is a teenage bride to take care of the initial hormones, a further bride for the early 20s, a third for the prosperous years, and a fourth for old age.

This, of course, compounds the problem of poverty: according to the Turkish army, the PKK recruits from the sons of the first marriage, embittered, and with a mother who comes last in the queue for the father's favours.

Besides, millions of Kurds in Turkey have been prospering in western and even central Anatolia. According to the latest book on this, by Henry Barkey and Graham Fuller (which is not favourable to the Turkish government's position) one-third of the politicians themselves are of Kurdish origin, there are countless successful Kurdish businessmen, and though the scale of the Kurdish prob-

'Two young primary school teachers were killed... The newly-married wife of one was going to be spared, but she asked to be killed as well, and the PKK obliged'

lem is evident in the shanty-town outskirts of any of the big cities of the west, there is no doubt that most Kurds just look for continued association with the Turkish state.

In any opinion poll, people will answer "Turkish" as their nationality, even where they also claim some sort of Kurdish antecedents. This is reflected in elections where the political party associated with Kurdish rights — HADEP — gains very few votes outside the southeastern regions. Because of the PKK terror there, many of the western Kurds fear going back.

What the answer to the Kurdish question is, I do not know. Even nationalist Turks sometimes say that there should be a Turkish-Kurdish state, a federation of the kind suggested by the late Turgut Ozal at the time of the Gulf war, as an alternative to the survival of Saddam Hussein.

Others say that the answer must be decentralisation, which, again, is not senseless. Many observers, in view of all the complications, just think that assimilation should go ahead, and will do so. Whatever the answer, this is not a situation where you can automatically apply minority statutes.

The Turkish republic has done, overall, a pretty remarkable job of "modernisation" in some ways, it has been the only successful Third World country, with a free media, respectable economic growth, and social circumstances that are way above those of any of her neighbours, except Greece.

The average life expectancy of an adult male is now almost 70, whereas in Russia it is 54. Not many Kurds wish to throw this away for the sake of the PKK's flyblown variant of Che Guevara's romantic agony. By giving aid and comfort to this murderer, the Italian government has behaved contemptibly.

The writer is professor of international relations at Bilkent University, Ankara.

— The Guardian

Stop poisoning us

To the editor:

IT'S ABOUT time drastic and immediate measures were taken by various concerned authorities in order to stop emission of black smoke from vehicles. I am sure that with some simple coordination between the Ministry of Environment and the Public Security Department, they could issue warrants to any driver to fix his/her vehicle exhaust system, or receive a fine.

It would be better still to make the driver surrender his/her license and retrieve it only after fixing the car. This should apply immediately to all government vehicles which are the major offenders.

We have been very proud about the cleanliness of the streets of Amman, but unfortunately we cannot say the same about its air.

I dare our officials to take prompt and bold action to stop this pollution which is poisoning us.

Hussam Derrakh
 Amman

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Cooperation in the context of pluralism, diversity and the participation of civil society best means for serving Jordan's goals and interests

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, delivers the Speech from the Throne at the opening of the Second Ordinary Session of the 13th Jordanian Parliament

IN THE NAME of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate; God's blessing and peace be upon our Prophet Mohammad, The Arab Prophet, and upon his kin, companions and whoever followed in their gracious steps until the Day of Judgement.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

In the Name of Allah, The Almighty, and with His grace and blessings, we hereby declare open the Second Ordinary Session of the Thirteenth Jordanian Parliament. This Session, if God so wills, will mark a new phase in building up the Jordan of dignity, pride and accomplishment. This will be brought about by the joint efforts of this Jordanian family, who work hand in glove towards securing a better future and a dignified life for all citizens of this dear and steadfast country.

Our pride in your honourable Assembly, and appreciation of the effective role it has played in building up Jordan, as a fully-fledged partner in shouldering responsibilities, dates back to the beginning of the modern-Jordanian state and the establishment of the first legislative council in 1929, the culmination of which was the establishment of Parliament.

Our grandfather, the late King Abdullah Ben Al Hussein, the founder of the Kingdom, worked on establishing the principle of Shura by word and deed. This principle was also maintained by His Majesty the late King Talal Ben Abdullah, during whose blessed reign our Constitution was promulgated.

His Majesty King Hussein, the architect of modern Jordan, continues to hold the banner and maintain the democratic tradition. He has always respected the Constitution and the parliamentary life, as well as promoting true democracy in this state of law and institutions despite adverse conditions that have prevailed in the region. The Hashemites, around whom all free Arabs amassed, introduced parliamentary systems into the countries of the Arab East, in Damascus and Baghdad, adhered to the principle of Shura, and insisted on the involvement of Parliament in political life. This has emanated from their conviction that shouldering the task of construction and development is a human responsibility, which has to be shouldered by all citizens as one team.

Public interest is the ultimate goal of government. Cooperation within the context of pluralism, diversity and the participation of civil society are the best means for serving our goals and interests.

The government is determined to achieve the highest levels of cooperation and coordination with the Legislative Authority. This is done within the provisions of the Constitution, which is the legal reference for each and every regularity of our life; and which stipulates the principle of the separation of powers.

The government is also determined to give the Judicial Authority, the highest degree of attention and autonomy in order for it to shoulder its sacred responsibilities and to be a safe haven for all those seeking justice.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

With the third millennium near, we are witnessing rapid changes in the world around us. In the light of these changes, it is incumbent on us to consolidate the foundations of our institutions. This entails that we:

a) pay due attention to civil society organisations; b) recognise and give due respect to trade unions within their professional framework;

c) lend support to our national parties in order for this political experience to be successful; d) adopt the principle of pluralism within the context of constitutional constants; and

e) enhance the citizen's sense of loyalty and devotion to country, nation, and faith.

By God's grace, we have confidently made strides ahead towards the fulfilment of our noble objectives with peace of mind and respect for others. This has made Jordan a country of achievement and a centre of gravity for intellectuals, thinkers and writers. And by God's grace, Jordan will continue to be an oasis of peace, security and justice.

Jordan is a country with a mission that has been in existence on its own soil since Ja'far Al Tayyar, who kept the banner flying. This mission, God willing, will continue until the Day of Judgement.

No doubt, your honourable Assembly is intent on identifying, objectively and without any bias, the needs of the country and diagnosing the problems it faces. We are equally sure that you are capable of contributing towards finding solutions conducive to more accomplishment and creating conditions that safeguard the rights and dignity of our citizens.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

Jordan, the heir of the Great Arab Revolt and the protector of its banners, shall always be loyal to its principles and well-established values manifested in its respect for citizens and their right to a decent and honourable life. We count on the awareness of our citizens, and in their readiness to face up to challenges. Had it not been for the great and noble sacrifices of our citizens and their readiness to spare no effort, we could not have reached the level of achievement and prosperity that we now enjoy. Jordan has never ceased to strive for the renaissance of the Arabs and the protection of the pure image of Islam and its values of tolerance, acceptance of the other and respect for the particulars of other nations.

With this in mind, moderation and centrism have always been our guiding light at the local, pan-Arab and international levels. In the same vein, we have adopted the principles of mutual consultation and open dialogue in order for all to participate effectively in shouldering the responsibility. Dialogue is not meant to be an exercise in futile argumentation and sophistry. We rather see it as a sophisticated instrument for benefiting from the aspirations of our citizens, their creativity and grand insights. Dialogue is also meant to be a vehicle for promoting our national culture, that emphasises quality, and fulfils the goals of the Great Arab Revolt, which was led by our Great Grandfather, the late Al Hussein Ben Ali, who rests in peace in the sacred land of Jerusalem, next to Al Aqsa Mosque for which the hearts of all Arabs and Muslims yearn.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

Our pan-Arab stance will continue to be a guiding principle underlying our policies and decisions. Throughout history, the Hashemites have given this issue paramount attention. The government will thus continue to maintain cooperation and coordination with all sisterly states, within a well-defined framework that respects the particularities of each state and endeavours to achieve what is best for the nation.

We shall never hesitate to do our best to lift the embargo imposed on our Arab country, especially the peoples of Iraq, Sudan and

Libya. And we shall spare no effort to heal any rift amongst our brothers.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

The armed forces and the security departments are held in high esteem by their Commander-in-Chief. Similarly, they command the respect and love of all citizens. They are equally admired and appreciated by all those who have been acquainted with the great responsibilities they shoulder and the excellent manner in which they execute them. By God's grace, they have come to enjoy international recognition and trust. Thus our brave soldiers are gallantly present in different troubled parts of the world. I extend my greetings to them all. I pay tribute to the martyrs of our Arab Army, who in defending Arab lands have sanctified its earth with sacred blood. We pledge to continue to fully support our armed forces and security departments and upgrade and modernise their capabilities. After all, they are the faithful and loyal guards of the country and citizens.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

We are going through an era in which Islam and Muslims are subjected to an unjust campaign. A similar campaign is directed against the identity of Christian Arabs. Such campaigns should be confronted through proper and appropriate upbringing and education of present and future generations.

We should not give in to this furious storm. Instead, we have to put things right at their point of origin, relying on positive interaction and engagement with other nations and civilisations, whilst defending our religion and values, and highlighting the true image of our civilisation and culture, which have contributed and will continue to contribute to the human civilisation.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

Our brethren Palestinian people are unequivocally entitled to their legitimate right to establish their independent state on their national soil. In this respect, we have been supporting the Palestinian people on two counts:

a) we firmly believe in the right of the Palestinian people to their land, resources and state; and

b) the Palestinians' requisition of their legitimate rights in full is a cornerstone for our own security and the security of the region at large.

Any denigration of these rights is tantamount to a violation of the security of this country and a threat to its stability, for we share the same destiny. The government looks forward to an era of cooperation and complementarity between the two brethren peoples. In this respect, we shall continue to support our brothers, the Palestinian people and their leadership in all relevant circles.

The government will also continue to support the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in our region, a peace in which all parties participate and which fulfils the rights of all.

In this context, we recall the words of His Majesty King Hussein over a month ago that: "We have no right to dictate, through irresponsible action, or narrow-mindedness, the future of our children and our children's children. There has been enough destruction, enough death, enough waste."

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

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Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

Jordan, with its demographic structure that comprises people from different origins and roots, is a model for the Arab World. We shall exert all possible efforts to keep intact the cohesion of our internal front. We shall not allow anyone to tamper with this sacred unity. We shall also relentlessly and confidently confront whoever tries to create rift in this front. Jordan is for all Jordanians; it is the country of achievement and excellence, and the cornerstone for any joint Arab action. It has a pivotal role in unifying the Arabs, and has always been honest with itself as well as with the Arab Nation at large. The Hashemites have always devoted themselves to the salvation of the Arab Nation and to the noble task of building a promising future for it.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

The government will continue to take all measures conducive to improving the efficiency of the national economy within an overall policy that enables the private sector, which owns and runs about two thirds of our economy, to shoulder its responsibilities.

The government will also continue to modernise administration, organisational regulations that are supportive of the process of privatisation, based on:

a) market liberalisation, b) protection of competitiveness, c) support for productivity and quality, and d) attracting direct Arab and foreign investment.

The government will also encourage the private sector and support its investment initiatives, which purport to enter non-traditional export markets, and to develop and enhance productivity in the field of touristic services and other professions, for which Jordan is well-known, such as health tourism. This cannot be achieved without financial control and rationalisation of government expenditure in keeping with national priorities. This should be also paralleled with endeavours to activate economic development and growth while maintaining price stability, securing adequate reserve funds and keeping stable the value of the dinar.

The government will continue to develop and strengthen cooperation with Arab and friendly coun-

tries. As much as we expect the support from brethren and friendly countries in the diverse fields of investment, which constitutes a major tributary to economic development, the government will create conditions aiming at strengthening international cooperation and encouraging investment in line with relevant criteria of transparency and competitiveness.

In a world increasingly governed by competitiveness, there is no choice other than working to strengthen our ability to compete and attract foreign investment. The international agenda is laden with issues and concerns, and the Middle East will not remain at the forefront of the priorities of the international community forever.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

The progress of any country is conditional on its ability to deal with fields of knowledge, provide students with the necessary skills and train them to think creatively away from extremism and fanaticism. This has been underlying our interest in, and concern for, the educational process and revision of all its aspects. The same applies to higher education for the purpose of having high quality education, research and community service as is required of our universities.

By the same token, we pay special attention to children, youth and the distinguished role of women in Jordan, notwithstanding our commitment to availing all Jordanians wherever they may be of social jus-

tice, as well as constant efforts to implement advanced programmes for the underprivileged. In the same vein, the government is currently engaged in restructuring the labour market, putting into effect the social security package and mobilising all resources in the strife against poverty and unemployment.

The government will also continue to support rural and municipal councils with a view to enabling them to provide essential services to their constituencies.

Our concern with culture and arts is duly recognised for their profundity, authenticity and openness to the intellectual trends in the Arab World in particular and in the whole world in general. It is for all this that

we pay special attention to the history of Jordan, whether ancient or modern, as well as the history of the Arab Nation.

As for the media, we will make every conceivable effort to ensure that it is a media serving the interests of the state, objective, professional, and committed to the value system in which we all believe within an environment of responsible freedom.

Honourable Senators, Honourable Deputies,

Jordan continues its process of democratisation confidently and steadily, supported by its own good people. It will continue to do so with the support of Allah, the Almighty, in the first place, and the concerted efforts of its own people in

their strife for progress which has never come to a halt despite all the hardships. The determination of Jordanians, as times have proven, is beyond defeat. This determination has been beyond subjugation to forces of darkness and distortion: thanks to a strong will that commands respect.

Today, more than ever, we are required to activate more latent potential of our courageous people to confront and eradicate all possible causes of frustration.

Our future generations shall receive nothing from us but the banners of determination and pride.

May Allah, the Almighty, guide us all to serve this country and its good people.

May the peace and blessings of Allah be with you.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan greeting high-ranking officials after delivering his speech at parliament (photo Yousef Allan)

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GSN

Fastlink
Keep Close

Jordan's trade deficit widens slightly

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Jordan's exports in the first eight months of 1998 declined, compared to the same period of 1997, government statistics showed Saturday.

The Central Bank of Jordan's (CBJ) figures showed that exports in the first eight months of this year amounted to JD669.1 million while imports totalled JD1.8 billion

resulting in a JD1.13 billion trade deficit.

The 1997 figures for the same period showed that exports totalled JD707.6 million while the volume of imports was JD1.8 billion, or a 1.09 billion deficit.

The CBJ monthly report showed that the Kingdom's exports to Arab countries amounted to JD269 million followed by exports to the Asian countries at JD157.5 million and JD42.9 million

to the European Union.

Saudi Arabia ranked first among the recipients of Jordanian-made products with JD66.3 million, followed by Iraq, JD66.2 million, and India JD64.6 million.

Among the European countries, the Netherlands ranked first with JD13.1 million, while exports to the United States did not exceed JD3.5 million, the report said.

Jordan's imports from the

European Union amounted to JD604 million followed by imports from the Asian states, JD441 million, the Arab states, JD351.7 million, the report said.

At JD178.7 million, Germany ranked first as the major exporter to Jordan. It was followed by imports from the United States, JD164 million, and Iraq, JD161 million.

Japan ranked first among the Asian countries as its

exports to Jordan amounted to JD103 million, while Saudi Arabia ranked first among the six Gulf Cooperation Council members, with a trade volume of JD70.1 million, the report added.

The 100-page report showed that the cost of living index in September amounted to 126.3 points compared to 124.9 points in August.

The trade volume at the Amman Financial Market in September amounted to JD16.5 million compared to JD34.8 million in the previous month, where the bulk of the volume was recorded by the banking sector.

The AFM's price index in September declined by 8.2 points compared to August's figure, down to 171.3 points, the report added.

Morocco sees GDP growth of 6.7%

RABAT (R) — The state-run Statistics Directorate office expects Moroccan economic growth of 6.7 per cent by end 1998 compared with a contraction of two per cent last year.

In its monthly newsletter, the office said growth was due mainly to the industrial and tourist sectors.

The number of tourists rose 11 per cent to around 1.4 million visitors in the first eight months of the year compared with the same period in 1997.

Tourism receipts jumped 16.2 per cent to 12.1 billion dirhams (\$1.3 billion) in January-August compared with the same period last year.

According to preliminary figures, the industrial output index was up 2.6 per cent at 114.5 points in the same period compared with the first eight months in 1997, it said without giving a value.

"Excluding the agriculture sector's output, Morocco's real GDP would grow 3.6 per cent in 1998, up from 3.1 per cent last year," the directorate said without giving an estimate of real GDP growth overall.

Agriculture represents around 20 per cent of overall GDP but employs around 50 per cent of the 10 million workforce.

Exchange Rates

CURRENCY	JORDAN DINAR	BAHRAIN DINAR	OMAN RIAL	QATAR RIAL	SAUDI RIAL	U.A.E. DIRHAM
JORDAN DINAR	1.0000	0.1887	0.1927	0.1878	0.1837	0.1844
BAHRAIN DINAR	5.2983	1.0000	1.0210	0.9493	0.9421	0.9301
OMAN RIAL	5.1633	0.8754	1.0000	0.9448	0.9418	0.9301
QATAR RIAL	0.5325	0.1005	0.1026	1.0000	0.9722	0.1035
SAUDI RIAL	0.5439	0.1026	0.1046	1.0213	1.0000	0.1035
U.A.E. DIRHAM	5.1454	0.9708	0.9812	0.9584	0.9572	1.0000
OMAN RIAL	0.4286	0.0809	0.0826	0.8048	0.7881	0.0833
QATAR RIAL	4.8145	0.9087	0.9278	0.9409	0.9328	0.9381
SAUDI RIAL	21.4831	0.4047	0.4159	0.4047	0.4047	0.4047
U.S. DOLLAR	1.4124	0.2666	0.2722	0.2653	0.2587	0.2587
BRITISH POUND	0.5539	0.1012	0.1046	0.1035	0.1035	0.1035
GERMAN MARK	2.4155	0.4567	0.4708	0.4567	0.4567	0.4567
FRANCE FRANC	1.9365	0.3768	0.3847	0.3768	0.3768	0.3768
SWITZERLAND FR.	1.1195	0.2135	0.2171	0.2135	0.2135	0.2135
JAPAN YEN	173.80	0.3280	0.3348	0.3280	0.3280	0.3280
HOLLAND GULDER	2.7281	0.5149	0.5257	0.5149	0.5149	0.5149
SWEDEN KRONA	11.5727	2.1842	2.2301	2.1842	2.1842	2.1842
ITALY LIRA	23.9547	4.5512	4.6162	4.5512	4.5512	4.5512
GERMAN MARK	48.3576	9.4220	9.6271	9.4220	9.4220	9.4220
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	17.0325	3.2147	3.2823	3.2147	3.2147	3.2147
CANADA DOLLAR	2.1681	0.4092	0.4173	0.4092	0.4092	0.4092
EURO	1.2293	0.2320	0.2369	0.2320	0.2320	0.2320

CURRENCY	U.S. DOLLAR	GERMAN MARK	FRANCE FRANC	SWITZERLAND FR.	BRITISH POUND	JAPAN YEN	HOLLAND GULDER	ITALY LIRA
U.S. DOLLAR	1.0000	1.6540	0.5838	0.7075	0.1740	0.8127	0.5177	5.4983
GERMAN MARK	0.6046	1.0000	0.3529	0.4277	0.1052	0.8127	0.5177	5.4983
FRANCE FRANC	1.7130	2.9333	1.0000	1.2119	0.2860	1.9365	1.2119	12.3603
SWITZERLAND FR.	1.4135	2.3379	0.8252	1.0000	0.2459	1.5887	0.7318	8.3344
BRITISH POUND	5.7488	5.9082	3.3559	4.0669	1.0000	4.6716	2.8782	33.8882
JAPAN YEN	123.0500	203.5247	71.8330	87.0534	21.4052	1.0000	63.7070	725.5349
HOLLAND GULDER	1.9315	3.1847	1.1278	1.3885	0.3380	1.5887	1.0000	11.3698
ITALY LIRA	8.1955	13.5520	4.1751	5.7286	1.4253	6.9587	4.2420	48.3110
GERMAN MARK	16.2580	26.0517	9.9027	11.9945	2.9503	13.7828	8.7807	100.0000
FRANCE FRANC	35.3700	56.5020	20.9480	25.0220	6.1528	28.7444	18.3122	208.6506
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	1.5785	2.8109	0.9215	1.1188	0.2746	1.2628	0.8173	9.3074
EURO	2.8750	4.7593	1.6783	2.0540	0.5001	2.3384	1.4885	16.9518
CYPRUS POUND	2.0378	3.3705	1.1886	1.4177	0.3545	1.5887	1.0000	12.0754
AUSTRIA SCHILLING	12.0580	19.9456	7.0591	8.5313	2.0977	9.8001	6.2433	71.1026
CANADA DOLLAR	1.5380	2.5338	0.8861	1.0880	0.2870	1.2475	0.7947	9.0529
EURO	0.8703	1.4395	0.5081	0.6157	0.1514	0.7073	0.4508	5.1318

MAJOR CURRENCIES AGAINST JORDAN DINAR

CURRENCY	U.S. DOLLAR	GERMAN MARK	FRANCE FRANC	SWITZERLAND FR.	BRITISH POUND	JAPAN YEN	HOLLAND GULDER	ITALY LIRA
U.S. DOLLAR	1.0000	1.6540	0.5838	0.7075	0.1740	0.8127	0.5177	5.4983
GERMAN MARK	0.6046	1.0000	0.3529	0.4277	0.1052	0.8127	0.5177	5.4983
FRANCE FRANC	1.7130	2.9333	1.0000	1.2119	0.2860	1.9365	1.2119	12.3603
SWITZERLAND FR.	1.4135	2.3379	0.8252	1.0000	0.2459	1.5887	0.7318	8.3344
BRITISH POUND	5.7488	5.9082	3.3559	4.0669	1.0000	4.6716	2.8782	33.8882
JAPAN YEN	123.0500	203.5247	71.8330	87.0534	21.4052	1.0000	63.7070	725.5349
HOLLAND GULDER	1.9315	3.1847	1.1278	1.3885	0.3380	1.5887	1.0000	11.3698
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GERMAN MARK	16.2580	26.0517	9.9027	11.9945	2.9503	13.7828	8.7807	100.0000
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AUSTRIA SCHILLING	1.5785	2.8109	0.9215	1.1188	0.2746	1.2628	0.8173	9.3074
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EURO	0.8703	1.4395	0.5081	0.6157	0.1514	0.7073	0.4508	5.1318

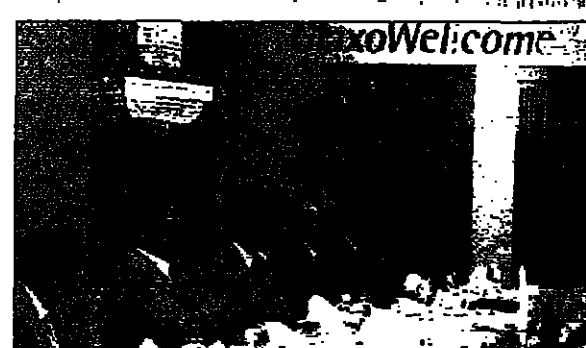
STOCK MARKET	INDEX	CLOSING	LAST	CHANGE	PRECIOUS METALS	METAL	ASK	BID
FRANKFURT	DAX	5121.48	5091.63	69.85	GOLD	285.60	286.10	
HONG KONG	HANG SENG	10742.11	10778.82	-36.71	SILVER	4.52	4.52	
LONDON	FTSE 100	3544.26	3567.30	-23.04	PLATINUM	350.00	352.00	
NEW YORK	DJ INDEX	8233.09	8233.09	0.00				
NEW YORK	NYSE COMPOSITE	281.00	281.00	-0.04				
NEW YORK	AMEX COMPOSITE	873.82	868.34	5.48				
NEW YORK	S&P 500	1192.29	1198.87	-6.58				
TOKYO	NIKKEI-225	15069.38	15207.77	-138.39				
PARIS	CAC 40	3815.53	3849.84	-34.31				
FRANKFURT	COMPOSITE	4848.70	4848.70	0.00				

GLAXOWELLCOME HONOURS PIONEERS, ENT SPECIALISTS IN JORDAN

IN HONOUR of the ENT Doctors who have been practising in this field for over 30 years, GLAXOWELLCOME Hosted at the Amman Marriott Hotel a formal dinner meeting last Tuesday, 24/11/1998.

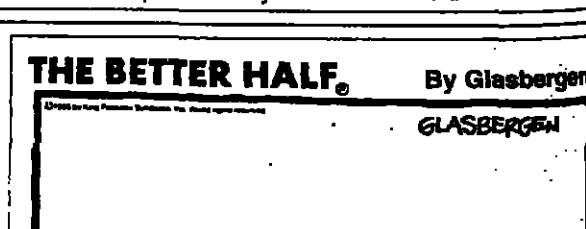
The honoured Doctors are: Former Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali represented by Eng. Mr. Shadi Abdul Salam Al Majali, former Minister of Health H.E. Dr. Zaid Hamzeh, Dr. Moh'd Najjar, Dr. Samir Jabshan, Dr. Hassan Badran, Dr. Nayer Sunna, Dr. Khalidoun Jayousi, Dr. Fawzi Sabagh, Dr. Victor Batarseh, and Dr. Jamal Al-Hijleh.

The event was attended by members of the organising committee of the 1st Int'l congress for



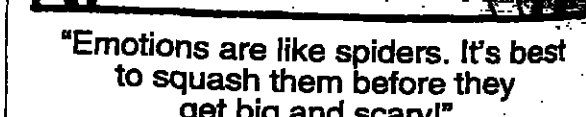
the Jordanian Society of Otorhinolaryngology, Messrs. Suleiman Tamouh & Sons, GLAXOWELLCOME agent in Jordan, and other individuals concerned.

The ceremony commenced with a welcoming speech from G/W Manager for Jordan & Syria Mr. Awad Freij, followed by the



the Jordanian Society of Otorhinolaryngology speech presented by Prof. Musa Jamal/Head of the Society, then the honoured speaker presented by H.E. Dr. Hamzeh.

Finally, the honoured Doctors were presented with souvenirs in recognition of their long-standing achievements.



"Emotions are like spiders. It's best to squash them before they get big and scary!"



THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



GLASBERGEN

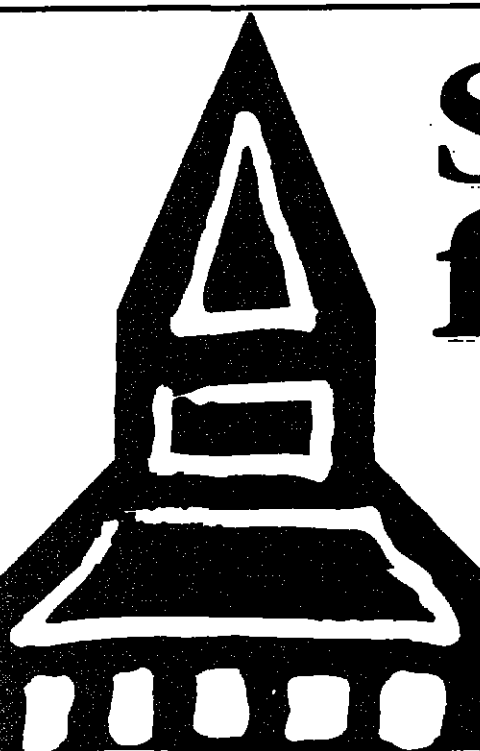


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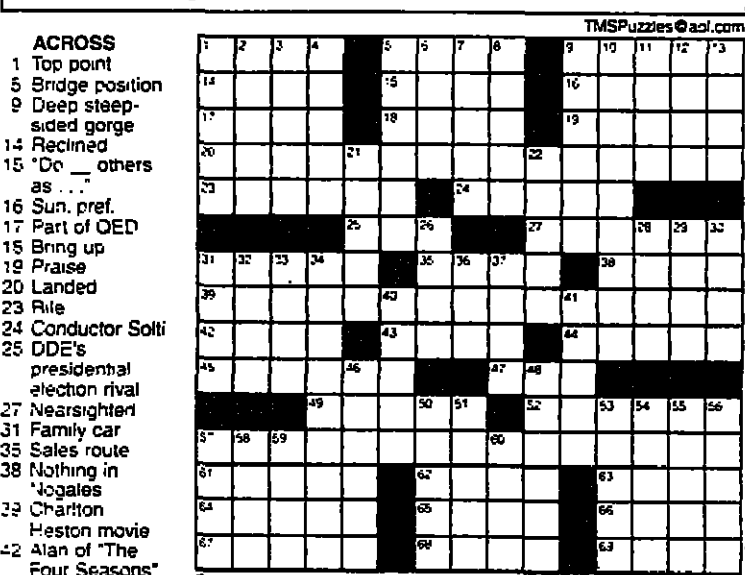
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THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams



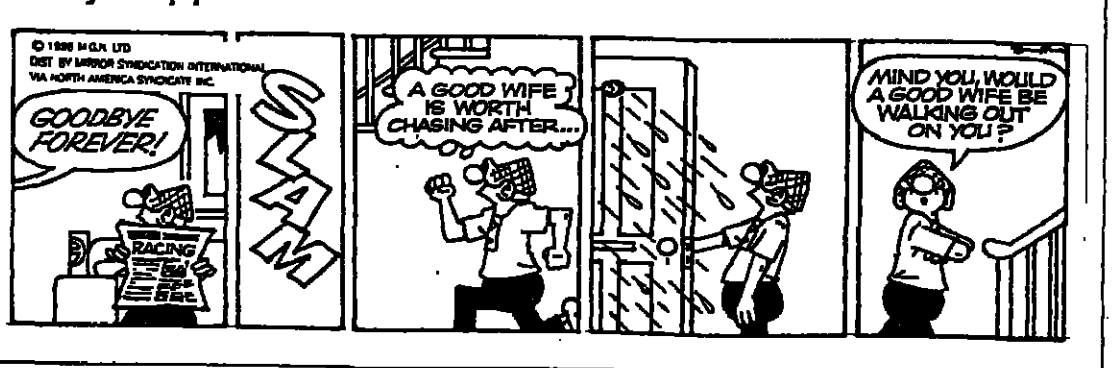
By Gerald R. Ferguson Portland, OR

- ACROSS
- Top point
 - Bridge position
 - Deep steep-sided gorge
 - Reclined
 - "Do ... others as ..."
 - Sun. pref.
 - Part of OED
 - Bring up
 - Praise
 - Landed
 - Rile
 - Conductor Soliti
 - DDE's
 - presidential election rival
 - Nearsighted
 - Family car
 - Sales route
 - Nothing in
 - Vogues
 - Chariton
 - Heston movie
 - Alan of "The Four Seasons"
 - Atlantic food
 - Light
 - Littlenecks or cherrystones
 - Closer
 - 2050
 - Wave top
 - pentameter
 - Daytime drama series
 - Extremely dry
 - Twofold
 - Jump
 - Give off
 - Land measure
 - Mediterranean volcano
 - Garrats
 - Char slightly
 - British gun
- DOWN
- Guinness and
 - Baldwin
 - Weight for
 - emeralds
 - Don Johnson
 - TV series, "Vice"
 - Go inside
 - Old World
 - Once
 - again
 - Comic actor
 - Nut cake
 - Bilthosome
 - Six-sided
 - Having wings
 - 12 Sedimentary material
 - Closet eater?
 - Allman or Eddy
 - Vitality
 - Portico of ancient Greece
 - Daddy
 - Same as mentioned
 - "Auntie Mame" co-star Peggy
 - Pianist's reach
 - Model
 - Macpherson
 - Avant-garde art movement
 - Washington
 - D.C. stadium
 - List component
 - Flung
 - Brilliant success
 - Constructs
 - "For the Boys" star
 - Mountain orders
 - Armistice
 - Pack animals
 - Butler of "Grace Under Fire"
 - Lacking substance
 - TV channel of politicians
 - Skateboarder
 - Type of my
 - Not kosher
 - Byron poem

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

NAF chief reveals problems of non-repayment and failures of small projects

NEARLY 35 per cent of the small projects backed by the National Aid Fund (NAF) have failed, said Khaled Ghneim, NAF acting director. He attributed the failure to fraudulent acts by the beneficiaries due to difficult economic conditions and lack of specialised cadres at the fund to follow up on the projects. Ghneim stressed that the responsibility for the failure of most of the projects falls completely on the beneficiaries who either sold the projects at half their cost or did not follow up correctly on the work for lack of experience. Ghneim said NAF has started to sort this problem gradually by implementing the regulations amended by the board of directors.

He indicated that article 19 of the regulations stipulate that if a beneficiary is found to have given up the project without informing the NAF administration, the penalty would be to double the loan amount and repaying it over half the period agreed before in addition to referring the beneficiary to the NAF lawyer. The acting director mentioned non-repayment of instalments as another problem for NAF but he attributed that to weak security in the past and the widespread favouritism. Ghneim indicated that non-repayment was on the decline as the rate of settling dues has risen to 45.7 per cent (Al Dustour).

Halaqah mentions trade exchange through Internet as new challenge for Jordan

JORDAN FACES many challenges now and in the near future but most importantly is trade exchange through the Internet, said Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Mohamad Halaqah. He added that the volume of trade through the Internet amounts to \$2 billion and is expected to reach \$300 billion by the year 2005.

Halaqah indicated that this matter requires many changes until finding a solution to problems related to a system of trade such as signing documents, taxes and customs. Speaking during a seminar, the secretary general called for benefiting from the experiences of other world countries in the area of "good manufacturing practice." He also called for formulating a new terminology that would go along

the coming era describing it as "good exports practice."

The secretary general said: "We suffer from a deficit in the trade balance as our imports are 2.5 times the value of our exports." He stressed that there is no way out from the international recession cycle without resorting to exports. He stressed exports for Jordan specifically because of the small size of the market.

Halaqah emphasised that the Jordanian economic policy focuses on two main elements: Attracting investment and consolidating national exports. He highlighted the importance of the two elements in keeping the flow of foreign currencies to the Kingdom and in easing the rate of unemployment (Al Dustour).

Central Bank reserves stood at JD2.4b at end of September

By Tareq Ayyoub

AMMAN — Gold and foreign currency reserves at the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) declined to JD2.4 billion in September compared to JD2.5 billion during the same period of 1997, the CBJ's monthly report showed Saturday. The report, which was made available to the Jordan Times, indicated that the Kingdom's foreign reserves in September amounted to \$1.32 billion, which covers Jordan's imports for four months, compared to

JD1.59 billion in September 1997, or enough to cover Jordan's purchases for 4.8 months.

One reason for the decline in foreign reserves according to recent news reports was the sudden demand for the U.S. currency following the media reports of His Majesty King Hussein's health.

The King has been under treatment for non-Hodgkin Lymphoma in the United States since July.

The 100-page report also showed that assets in foreign currencies in commercial

banks amounted to JD2.45 billion in September compared to JD2.15 billion in the same period last year.

The assets in local currencies in these banks amounted to JD7.8 billion in September compared to JD7.52 billion during the same month in 1997.

While the commercial banks' deposits amounted to JD6.6 billion in September, up from JD6.4 billion in the same period of 1997, foreign currency reserves in these institutions amounted to JD2.5 billion compared to JD2.3 billion in September

of last year.

The credit facilities extended by the licensed banks to different economic activities and borrowers in September amounted to JD4.2 compared to JD4.03 billion in the same period of 1997, the report found.

Deposits in Jordanian dinars in the commercial banks' branches in the Palestinian self-rule areas amounted to JD1.69 billion compared to JD1.56 billion in September of 1997, the report found.

The CBJ statistics indicated bad cheques in September

amounted to JD38.4 million compared to JD41 million in August of the current year.

Total foreign grants and domestic revenues in the second quarter of this year amounted to JD364 million while the government's expenditure in the same period amounted to JD505.3 million, with a deficit of JD141.3 million, the report said.

Tax revenues in the second quarter of this year amounted to JD202 million compared to JD129.8 million in non-tax revenues, it added.

UAE warns foreign banks to hire more nationals

DUBAI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has threatened foreign banks with a freeze on new foreign recruitment unless they step up their efforts to hire nationals, newspapers said.

"It is possible that the government will stop new visas allowing banks to hire foreigners," the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Matar Hamid Al Tayer, was quoted as saying by Al Bayan newspaper.

Banks were urged by the government last year to raise recruitment levels for locals by four per cent a year.

But Tayer said local recruitment by some of the country's 48 foreign banks stood only at about one per cent a year.

He said his ministry "could sanction these banks, if they do not conform to the decision of the authorities, and forbid them to hire foreigners."

Official estimates put the number of Emiratis in the banking and insurance sectors at about 12 per cent of the total workforce of 12,000.

In 1996, the UAE expelled 170,000 illegal foreign workers and has tightened its immigration laws.

Foreigners account for about 85 per cent of the country's population of 2.4 million.

Swiss insurance premiums rise in 1997 to \$32.2b

BERN (AFP) — Gross insurance premiums in Switzerland rose 8.5 per cent in 1997 to 44.2 billion Swiss francs (\$32.2 billion), largely due to growth in the life insurance sector, the Federal Office of Private Insurers (OFAP) has said.

Gross premiums in life insurance rose 13.7 per cent last year compared to 11.7 per cent in 1996.

However, those in the casualty and property division fell by 2.2 per cent, OFAP said.

An influx of new entrants into the Swiss market has more than compensated for the disappearance of some firms due to mergers.

OFAP counted 164 private insurers in Switzerland in 1997, or 11 more than existed two years previously.

Seven of the newcomers are foreign firms establishing branches in Switzerland, where there are a total of 32 such branches, most specialising in life insurance.



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HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1998

By Linda C. Black, Tribune Media Services, Inc.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You're in the mood to travel, back to old, familiar stomping grounds. If you can gather up a bunch of your buddies to go with you, so much the better. Looks like all of you are in the mood to play — more for the fun of it than for the gold medal. Knowing you, however, you might win one anyway.

Taurus: (April 20 to May 20) You could get a lucky today, financially. You might find something on sale, in your pocket. How long has it been since you cleaned your attic or basement? There might be a surprise just waiting to be discovered. It's a good idea to beaten down winter anyway. That can be your excuse to go travelling.

Gemini: (May 21 to June 21) This is a fabulous day for you. If you've been thinking about running the marathon, sign up. Your energy level will be high, and your friends will be a great support. It'll be even more fun if you're playing a game with teams. Softball may not be in season right now, but you can find something that is.

Cancer: (June 22 to July 22) You're busy again today, possibly at the insistence of an older person. You should be the one who decides what you do with your time, right? Well, today you'd be wiser to obey orders, and quickly. The other person isn't in the mood to argue. Save your energy for a time or place where you can use it to better advantage.

Leo: (July 23 to August 22) Love looks good for you right now. You could have a few stumbling blocks with communication, but nothing you can't handle. When the other person says something to you, why don't you just repeat it back? You might be surprised to find out it's not what the other person thinks he or she said at all.

Virgo: (August 23 to September 22) Continue to divvy up your money carefully among all the places you could spend it. This will take concentration. There are plenty of things to spend money on, that's for sure. You're stretching your resources as far as they can go, but don't look at this as a hardship. Think of it instead as a game, at which you excel.

Libra: (September 23 to October 23) The party continues. Looks like lots of outrageous people pushing themselves, and possibly you, to the limit. Under these conditions, it's easy to get swept along with the tide. You could find yourself doing something you wish you hadn't. It's OK. It's new adventures, but don't be ridiculous about it. Remember to fasten your safety belt.

Scorpio: (October 24 to November 21) You're racing around again today. You've got zillions of things to do, and nowhere near enough time. Don't get stressed. Just push yourself into overdrive. You're in the mood for it, and nobody's making you do this. Besides, you could be in on a fabulous opportunity. It's almost as if the more you work, the more money you make.

Sagittarius: (November 22 to December 21) You are lucky in just about everything. You're solving difficult problems as if they were child's play. You communicate well with the ones you love, and your life is full. You look back to happy times and forward to more of them. If you find yourself in a slump, it's because you can't figure out what to do with all your abundance.

Capricorn: (December 22 to January 19) You and your sweetheart need to talk. Issues raised over the week-end need to be resolved. You also need to compare notes on what's going on. Between you, you'll get a good picture of what's going on. Then you can decide what to do next. The time for decisions will be tonight and tomorrow.

Aquarius: (January 20 to February 18) You're getting new ideas, some of them contradicting what you already know. That happens when you learn. Just keep an open mind and ask leading questions. Now the rest of the story is coming out, and this could change things quite a bit. No problem. You can roll with the punches, if you keep objective in mind.

Pisces: (February 19 to March 20) This is a good day to invest in yourself. Get something that will give you an advantage in your career. A fabulous opportunity is coming up to make quite a bit more money, but you could use some help in getting organized. Today, a tool that will help you stay on schedule would be an excellent purchase.

Birth Stone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye

Italy beats Yugoslavia for 3rd straight world title

TOKYO (AP) — Italy became the first men's team ever to win a third straight world title Sunday, defeating Yugoslavia 15-12, 15-5, 15-10 in the World Volleyball Championships final.

In another final-round match, Cuba beat Brazil 12-15, 15-6, 15-11, 15-12 for the bronze medal in the 24-team men's competition that started Nov. 13.

In the 16-team women's contest held Nov. 3-12, Olympic champion Cuba also defended its world title. China placed second, followed by Russia and fourth-place Brazil.

Italy's conquest in men's volleyball began in 1990 when it overpowered Cuba for its first world championship in Rio de Janeiro. It retained the title in 1994 in Greece.

But after numerous trophies, Italy lost the gold-medal match to the Netherlands at the 1996 Olympics.

On Sunday, the Italians led throughout, except for a brief 2-1 deficit in the second set, before a capacity crowd of 12,000 at Tokyo's Yoyogi Stadium.

The first set saw the score tied four times, at 5-6, 9 and 12. Andrea Giani, Andrea Gardini and Marco Brachi led the Italians edging their opponents in the attacking, retrieving the ball, serving and blocking.

The victory was revenge for Italy's three straight losses to the Yugoslavian squad since June last year. The first defeat was in a



Italian volleyball players celebrate their victory-point against Yugoslavia in the final match of the men's World Volleyball Championships in Tokyo. Italy beat Yugoslavia 3-0 (15-12, 15-6, 15-10) (AFP photo)

World League match and then in the European Championships six weeks later. The Italians also lost their quarterfinal round-robin match against Yugoslavia last week.

The only time Yugoslavia mounted a real challenge came when the match was nearly over. It saved seven match points as it battled to stay in the game. At one point, an

excited Italian fan even ran onto the court believing his team had won.

Team captain Gardini had to point and show the man the giant scoreboard which still read Italy 14, Yugoslavia 10.

The victory was a happy farewell for Bebeto, who has announced this is his last game in charge of the national team. Gardini was the most

experienced player. He was a member of the starting six during all three World Championships that Italy won.

"Finally the tournament is over," Bebeto said when Samuele Papi tipped in the championship point.

Yugoslavian coach Zoran Gajic agreed Italy deserved the gold medal. "The Italians sure were superior in speed and power," he said.

place finishes follow two third-places here last year.

"It is my best start to the season," Kostner said. "Last year I had two thirds and this year I have two seconds."

Next year, she said, she'll try to keep improving.

Germany's Haeusel said she could have also reached the podium on Friday but for a mistake in the middle of the course where she lost her edge and almost fell.

"It was a big mistake," she said. "I expected too much of myself after the training runs. Today I just tried to relax."

The race was delayed twice due to

couldn't crack the top five, was third in a time of 1:35.95.

Goetschl's two downhill victories at Lake Louise in consecutive days matched the performance last year of German star Katja Seizinger, who missed this year's Lake Louise stop with an injury.

Asked about Seizinger's absence, Goetschl said: "It is sad she is not here, but it makes it more interesting. It is good that others are getting a chance to show what they can do."

Goetschl said the Austrians trained well over the summer and it showed in their results here.

Kostner is off to the fastest start of her alpine career. Her two second-

place finishes follow two third-places here last year.

The race was delayed twice due to

Goetschl flashes to 2nd straight downhill victory

LAKE LOUISE (AFP) — Austrian speedster Renate Goetschl shrugged off two fog delays to win her second women's alpine World Cup downhill in as many days.

Goetschl led the Austrian charge for the second-straight day, blazing down the Lake Louise course in a time of one minute, 35.36 seconds.

Austria had four skiers in the top six Saturday and three in the top six on Friday.

For the second day in a row, Italy's Isolde Kostner had to settle for second. She was 56-hundredths of a second behind Goetschl. Regina Haeusel of Germany, who skied a strong race Friday but

couldn't crack the top five, was third in a time of 1:35.95.

Goetschl's two downhill victories at Lake Louise in consecutive days matched the performance last year of German star Katja Seizinger, who missed this year's Lake Louise stop with an injury.

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place finishes follow two third-places here last year.

The race was delayed twice due to

Stangassinger continues Austrian dominance

ASPEN (AFP) — Thomas Stangassinger survived an icy course and the second-run heroics of Sebastian Amiez to capture a men's slalom here Saturday, and continue Austria's dominance in the alpine World Cup.

Stangassinger, the 1994 Olympic slalom gold medalist in Lillehammer, claimed his ninth career World Cup victory in his preferred discipline with a total time of 1min 27.32sec.

But not before France's Amiez roared back from 22nd place — 1.47 seconds behind first-leg leader Stangassinger. His second leg of 42.54 seconds gave him a total of 1:27.58. Norway's Tom Stiansen was third with an aggregate time of 1:27.69.

"It is good to get an early victory," Stangassinger said. "It shows that at 33 years (eds correct) I can still beat the competition."

Stangassinger's victory continued Austria's remark-

able dominance of the young World Cup season. Austrian racers have won all but one of the five races so far.

Stangassinger established a convincing lead on the first run, despite an icy course that proved disastrous to reigning Olympic champion Hans Peter Baur.

The flawless Stangassinger finished the first leg 23-hundredths of a second ahead of compatriot Mario Reigner, with another Austrian, Christian Mayer, 26-hundredths of a second behind the leader.

Amiez, mired in 22nd, had no premonition of what was to come.

"I was hoping for 10th place at best," he said. "It was really unexpected."

But conditions had changed for the second leg, and those who trailed after the first run — and started early in the second — found the soft snow more favourable.

Albertville Games gold



Fabrizio Tescari of Italy catches a ski tip on a gate in the lower section of the men's World Cup slalom during the first heat. Thomas Stangassinger of Austria won the event, with Sebastian Amiez of France second, and Tom Stiansen of Norway third (Reuters photo)

medallist Finn Christian Jagge was in 28th place after the first leg, more than two seconds adrift. He clocked the fastest second-leg time to move up to seventh.

Stangassinger skied conservatively and produced the 13th-fastest second-leg time for the win.

It was an encouraging day for the Italian team, now trying to fill the void created by the departure of Alberto Tomba. Italy had two top-ten finishers in Angelo Weiss (fifth) and Giorgio Rocca (10th).

El Condor Pasa wins Japan Cup

TOKYO (AFP) — El Condor Pasa led a Japanese 1-2-3 finish to beat a strong international field in the \$3.2 million Japan Cup horse race on Sunday.

Japanese jockey Masayoshi Ebina guided the three-year-old colt to victory after being third on the home stretch of the 2,400-metre Tokyo Race Course to win in two minutes 25.9 seconds.

Air Groove, with Norihiro Yokoyama in the saddle, came in second two and a half lengths behind, followed by Yukio Okabe's mount Special Week half a length further back.

Silent Hunter from Japan led for most of the 15-horse race before El Condor Pasa took control in the final two furlongs.

"I have to take my hat off to El Condor. He is really a strong horse," said a jubilant Ebina, whose win was worth 132 million yen (\$1.1 million).

Chief Bearhard from Canada, ridden by Jose Santos, was the leading foreign horse two lengths behind Special Week followed by Cash Asmusen mount Maxzene from the United States.

Arab nations determined to silence rest of Asia

BANGKOK (AFP) — Arab footballing nations are determined to prove to the rest of Asia where the real power lies when the Asian Games' preliminary round kicks-off here on Monday.

With reigning Asian Cup holders Saudi Arabia refusing to send a team because of a long simmering diplomatic row between the two countries, Gulf Cup winners Kuwait will fly the flag for the west of Asia as the continent continues to remain divided both on and off the pitch.

The bitter rivalry between west and east Asia came to a head two years ago when the executive committee of the Asian Football Confederation, the sport's regional governing body, awarded the hosting rights of the 2000 Asian Cup to Lebanon ahead of China.

Breaking the AFC's unwritten rule that saw the hosting of previous tournaments alternate between east and west.

Now with the Arab block gaining more political control at both regional and global level after backing Sepp Blatter's FIFA presidential campaign ahead of Lennart Johansson, the eastern favoured candidate, the confrontation moves out of the political arena and back on to the playing field.

Earlier in the month Kuwait stylishly won the Gulf Cup, a tournament played between the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Although the Asian games team will consist mainly of Olympic players, the Milan Macala-coached side will be among the favourites. Captain of the side is 21-year-old striker Bashar Abdullah, who is set to announce his transfer from Kuwaiti club side Al Salmiya to Saudi Arabian giants Al Hilal on Monday, but missing is Abdullah's potent striker partner and

the Gulf Cup's top scorer, Jasssem Al Houwaidi.

Fellow Arab nations such as Qatar and Oman are unlikely to prove much of a threat to the powerhouses of the east such as Japan, South Korea and China, while the United Arab Emirates were ineffectual at the Gulf Cup several weeks ago, only finishing third.

The west's bid for glory is strengthened by Iran's decision to send a near full strength team. Young players such as Ali Karimi have been drafted in to replace Bundesliga-based former Asian Player of the Year Khodadad Azizi and Mehdi Pashazadeh.

But with the likes of Bayern Munich forward Ali Daei and Arminia Bielefeld's Karim Bagheri, plus Asian Young Player of the Year Mehdi Mahdavi, in the squad Iran will be hoping to emulate their 1990 victory in China.

For the east, South Korea have sent a side made up of players who are likely to feature when the country co-hosts the World Cup finals with Japan in 2002 while the Japanese are one of the few nations to heed the AFC's advice and send their entire Olympic team. Their team is led by the precocious Shinji Ono, a member of Japan's World Cup squad at the age of 18, and striker Atsushi Yanagisawa, whose club side Kashima Antlers won the J-League title at the weekend.

China have taken a leaf from the Korean book and have sent a team mixed with experience and youth.

Coach Bobby Houghton has brought captain Fan Zhiyi and left-back Sun Jihai back from English First Division side Crystal Palace as well as including several other senior internationals to play alongside the cream of the nation's young players.

Hoping to throw a spanner in the works as they did four years ago will be Uzbekistan. The Uzbeks came to the last Asian Games football tournament, in Hiroshima, as complete unknowns and left Japan with the gold medals after defeating China in the final.

Once again the Uzbeks will be sending a strong squad with veteran striker Igor Skvyrin called back from Israel to play alongside striker partner Oleg Statsikh in an attempt to upset the form book once again. Another of the tournament's dark horses will be Kazakhstan, who reached the second round of Asia's World Cup qualifying tournament last year. Their challenge will be boosted by the performances of their under-19 side at the Asian Youth Championship in Chiangmai last month, when they finished fourth and qualified for the World Youth Championship in Nigeria next year.

Several of that side will feature in the squad here. Hosts Thailand, coached by European Cup winner Peter Withe, will have to stand up to the pressure of the home crowd and recent controversy after their on-pitch brawl with Qatar last week.

The Thais, whose dominance of the South East Asian region ended in September when they lost the Tiger Cup to Singapore, have a lot to prove to both themselves and to the demanding home support and have set themselves the lofty target of reaching the semi-finals.

The Thais, whose dominance of the South East Asian region ended in September when they lost the Tiger Cup to Singapore, have a lot to prove to both themselves and to the demanding home support and have set themselves the lofty target of reaching the semi-finals.

IOC warns of more turmoil in Sydney Games organisation

SYDNEY (AFP) — The International Olympic Committee (IOC) Sunday lamented the loss of a key organiser of the Sydney Olympics and warned turmoil within the ranks was likely to continue.

Rod McGeoch, the 52-year-old lawyer who fronted Sydney's successful bid for the 2000 Games, walked out of the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (SOCOG) last week saying there was a vendetta against him.

IOC coordinator for the Sydney 2000 Jacques Rogge said he was shocked at McGeoch's resignation and there was no guarantee the board would not undergo more changes before the Olympics.

"It's a big machine. It's a very difficult issue," he told Sydney's Sunday Telegraph from Belgium. "It might not be the end of the turnover."

He said McGeoch was the man who convinced the IOC to give Sydney the Olympics.

"He's a very charismatic leader. He brought the Olympics to Sydney —

that's a fact." While Sydney's Olympic planning was on track despite McGeoch's departure, Rogge warned that the impact of a proposed sales tax on Games merchandise would be disastrous.

The other outstanding issue was whether SOCOG would be able to meet its ambitious revenue targets from the sale of tickets.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HIRSCH
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CLOSE THE HATCHES

North-South vulnerable. South deals

NORTH
♠ K E 4 3
♥ Q 9 8
♦ A 4 3
♣ A K Q 9

WEST
♠ 9 7 2
♥ 10 8 7 3
♦ A Q 7 6 2
♣ 4

EAST
♠ Q J 10 8
♥ K 6 4
♦ J 9
♣ J 8 2

SOUTH
♠ A 6
♥ A J 9 8
♦ K 10 8
♣ 10 8 7 5

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♣ Pass 1♠ Pass
1NT Pass 2NT Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Six of ♣

There are times at the bridge table when you can turn the tables on a potential calamity. Today's deal is a typical example.

The auction was routine. Once South showed a limited, balanced hand North saw no point in raising South's suit with four-card support

headed by the three top honors. Trying for an 11-trick game when there was a more attractive nine-trick one in sight would have been foolish.

West led a low diamond and declarer could not afford to hold up. After winning the king, declarer cashed two rounds of clubs and learned the bad news when West discarded a low heart. The queen of hearts came next, covered by the king and won by the ace in the closed hand. How would you proceed?

After some thought, declarer found the key play, cashing the table's remaining club honor. That posed an insoluble discarding problem for West. If West parted with a heart, declarer would score three more tricks in the suit; if West shuffled a diamond, declarer would have time to set up a long heart. That forced a spade pitch from the defender, and declarer read the position perfectly.

The ace and king of spades were cashed and a diamond from dummy fetched the nine and ten. West was able to win, cash three more diamond tricks to complete the defensive book, but then had to lead a heart away from the ten into declarer's J 8 tenace.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:463-4144	CINEMA TEL:463-4144	CINEMA TEL:5699238	CINEMA TEL:5677420	CINEMA TEL:5934793	CINEMA TEL:5934793	Risham Yanes Theatre TEL:4625155
	PHILADELPHIA '1'	PHILADELPHIA '2'	PLAZA	CONCORD	GALLERIA 1	GALLERIA 2	
	Drew Barrymore .. in MAD LOVE Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Michael Goughlas & Val Kilmer .. in THE GHOST AND THE DARKNESS Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CONCORD "1" FEAR IS IN THE AIR 'TURBULENCE AHEAD' Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:30 CONCORD "2" BODYGUARD Shows: 3:30, 5:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Antonio Banderas .. in THE MASK OF ZORRO Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	ABDOUN www.cns.com.jo/Galleria Comedian Mohammad Huneidi .. in SAEEDI AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	Watch out for the new play

Listings for films and showing times as received by cinemas and their advertising agencies.

LOCAL
SPORTS
SCENE

Handicapped athletes mark King's birthday

AMMAN — Under the patronage of Prime Minister Faysal Tarawneh, the Jordan Sports Federation for the Handicapped in conjunction with the Ministry of Social Development will hold a sports festival for handicapped athletes Sunday. The event in Amman is marking His Majesty King Hussein 63rd birthday.

Amman to host International Wrestling Tournament

AMMAN — The Jordan Olympic Committee has given the Jordan Wrestling Federation (JWF) the go-ahead to hold an international wrestling championship next year, sanctioned by the International Wrestling Federation. JWF President Ibrahim Awamleh said the committee set JD14,000 for the event, which will include athletes from Egypt, Syria, Tunisia, Algeria, Iraq, Romania, Bulgaria, Iran, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Greece, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, and Jordan. A joint Jordanian-Syrian training camp is expected to be held at the end of next month.

Basketball federation meets clubs officials

AMMAN — The Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) will meet Sunday with local clubs to discuss the possibility of organising an under-18 championship next month, according to JBF President Mudar Majdoub. The federation is expected to examine the situation with Al Jazireh Club after recent controversies between the two sides. Al Jazireh's Nasser Alawneh and Musa Bashir might join the national team's training after Majdoub said he would send an official request to the club regarding the issue.

Asian federation to hold coaches seminar

AMMAN — The Asian Soccer Federation is planning to hold two training courses next year for Jordanian coaches at the advanced and beginner levels. The two-week-long first course is expected to be held in Irbid in February, while the second will be held in Amman in May for three weeks. Nominees will be chosen later according to the federation's conditions.

Jordan competes in Arab futsal tournament

AMMAN — The national soccer team Monday starts training for the First Arab Futsal Championship, which will be held in Egypt Dec. 5-16. Mu'taz Rishbeh, Ali Mahmoud, Muhammad Mahadin, Badran Shaqran, Hasounah Sheikh, Hamdi Saeed, Hatem Aqel, Abdullah Qutari, Ali Jum'a, Hussein Alawneh, Hytham Samrin and Ra'fat Ali will represent Jordan in the event.

Irbid wins chess championship

IRBID — Irbid clinched the title of the Jordanian Cities Chess Championship, which was held over the weekend, after a tough competition against Amman and Salt teams. Teams from Zarqa, Mafraq, Ramtha, and Ajloun also took part.

Compiled by Ahmad Khatib

Special
Week
favourite
for Japan
Cup

TOKYO (R) — Japan Derby winner Special Week was listed as the 5-2 favourite on Saturday for Sunday's Japan Cup, the country's top international horse race.

Due to the thin field of foreign entries, Japanese horses were the top three favourites in the 2,400 metre race on turf, which offers 132 million yen (\$11 million) to the winner.

Three-year-old Special Week, sired by Kentucky Derby winner Sunday Silence out of Campaign Girl, cruised to an easy victory in the 2,400-metre Japan Derby on June 7. The colt will be ridden by Yukio Okabe.

Japanese five-year-old mare Air Groove, the runner up in last year's Japan Cup and ridden by Norihiro Yokoyama on Sunday, was the next favourite at 5-1.

Three-year-old Japanese colt El Condor Pasa with Masayoshi Ebina aboard was listed at 7-1.

Among the foreign horses, 1997 Breeder's Cup Turf winner Chief Bearhart was listed at 10-1.

The Canadian horse placed fourth in this year's Breeder's Cup Turf as the chestnut rallied in the home stretch, but did not have enough to defend its title.

British gelding Faithful Son with jockey Lanfranco Dettori was also at 10-1.

Faithful Son represents Godolphin Management and would appreciate the drop back from the two miles of the Melbourne Cup where he was a creditable seventh under top weight.

German colt Caitano was listed at 14-1 to win the Cup in its second straight attempt. Arc de Triomphe winning jockey Olivier Peslier will be aboard the colt.

Five-year-old U.S. mare Maxzene, ridden by Cash Asmussen, was at 25-1 while much-traveled British horse Luso was at 60-1.

Top Irish jockey Michael Kinane will try to lead the Clive Brittain-trained horse to victory in its seventh country.

Moya ends Spain's long wait
to reach Hanover final

HANOVER (AFP) — Carlos Moya became the first Spaniard since Manuel Orantes in 1976 to reach the World Championship final as he outfought Briton Tim Henman for a 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 semi-final victory here on Saturday.

Henman, who has improved his ATP Tour computer ranking from ninth to a career-best seventh, felt the tension in the closing stages of the 2hr 20min battle.

Moya produced a blazing passing shot which the Briton could not touch to hold two match points and then produced a superb service return winner for victory to take his career record to two wins and three defeats against Henman.

The Spaniard, winner of the French Open and now far from being merely a clay court specialist, will await an opponent from the second semi-final between top seed Pete Sampras of the United States and Spaniard Alex Corretja.

Henman blamed his defeat on his service, which was also cruelly exposed by Greg Rusedski on Friday.

"It has not been good enough all week. I wasn't getting a lot of first serves in and I had to win points from the backcourt moving up, that's not how I wanted to do it," the 24-year-old said.

However, Henman, who finished last year ranked 17 added that he would be disappointed if he did not make further progress next season.



Britain's Tim Henman returns a backhand to his Spanish opponent and this year's French Open champion Carlos Moya, during their semifinal clash at the ATP World Championships in Hanover (AFP photo)

"If I can continue the progress of the past five or six months, reaching the quarter-finals of Grand Slams will not be good enough," he said.

"I'll be wanting to get to the finals and win them," he added.

Sampras is seeking to cap a dream season — in which he clinched the year-end World No.1 ranking for a record-breaking sixth straight time — with a fifth trophy at the \$3.5 million championships.

Corretja will aim to double the Spanish pleasure at the eight-man event.

Moya needed 51 minutes to win the opening set in front of a crowd of 13,000

which included German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

The Spaniard broke Henman in the seventh game, taking a 4-3 lead. Three games later, he secured the set after Henman saved the first of two Moya set points with a sharply angled cross-court winner.

Moya put a forehand down the line to take the set on the next point.

The Briton rallied immediately in the second set, breaking the Spaniard twice for a 4-1 lead. Henman saved break points in the seventh game and levelled sets with an unreturnable serve.

Henman broke in the first game of the final set, but Moya then displayed his fighting spirit with a forehand past the Briton to break back and level at 3-3. The Briton failed on a pair of break point chances in the seventh game and had to save one against his own serve in the eighth.

Moya got out of potentially serious trouble when down 30-40 in the ninth game, saving the break point when Henman slipped and was unable to chase a return. The Briton made it 5-5 with a reflex volley winner but Moya then won the final two games to seal his win.

Warnecke
equals his
own world
record

FULDA, Germany (AFP) — Mark Warnecke of Germany equalled his own world record of 26.97sec for the 50m breaststroke at the German short-course swimming championships on Sunday.

Warnecke, 28, a bronze medalist at the Atlanta Olympics, set the short-course record on February 8, 1997 in Paris.

Bayern,
Leverkusen
pull clear

BONN (R) — Home wins for Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen on Saturday allowed them to pull away from their rivals at the top of the German first division.

Leaders Bayern cruised to a 2-0 triumph over Nuremberg with goals from Giovane Elber and Bixente Lizarazu.

Paulo Rink and Emerson gave Leverkusen a 2-0 victory against MSV Duisburg.

Leverkusen stayed second, two points behind Bayern, who have a game in hand.

Third-placed TSV 1860 Munich lost ground, crashing 4-1 at Werder Bremen. They were left five points behind Leverkusen.

West Ham move to 2nd

LONDON (R) — Two goals by Trevor Sinclair gave West Ham United a 2-1 victory over Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday and moved them to second place in the English Premier League. Harry Redknapp's team are on 26 points — three behind Aston Villa who came from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at Nottingham Forest.

Manchester United, Arsenal and Leeds are all in action on Sunday.

Duncan Ferguson celebrated his 8 million pounds (\$13.25 million) move to Newcastle United by scoring twice in a 3-1 home victory over Wimbledon while Danny Cadamateri, replacing the Scot at Everton, scored twice in their 2-1 win at Charlton.

Elsewhere, Emile Heskey scored in the last minute to earn 10-man Leicester a 1-1 draw at Coventry. Chelsea were held 1-1 at home by Sheffield Wednesday while Derby won 1-0 at Southampton.

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Goetschl of Austria, speeds past a gate while on her way to winning the first World Cup downhill of the season, in Lake Louise, Canada. Goetschl won with a time of 1:36.12, Italy's Osolde Kostner was second and Austria's Anna Meissnitzer was third (Reuters photo)

Goetschl cruises to downhill win

LAKE LOUISE (AFP) — Austrian Renate Goetschl won the first downhill of the season, in Lake Louise, Canada. Goetschl won with a time of 1:36.12, Italy's Osolde Kostner was second and Austria's Anna Meissnitzer was third (Reuters photo)

but she did prevent a top three sweep by the Austrian team. Austria had three racers in the top six as Michaela Dorfmeister finished sixth in 1:37.04.

Goetschl and Kostner were the only two skiers able, last winter, to beat Seizinger and win a downhill.

But Germany's Seizinger is still recovering from injury, as is America's Street. Seizinger won all three World Cup races at Lake Louise last year before going on to take the gold medal in the downhill at the Nagano Winter Olympics.

She is recovering from a knee injury suffered in June while testing new skis. She hopes to be back on skis in a couple of weeks and possibly compete in the world championships in January in Vail.

Street is nursing a knee injury that she fears could mean the end of her downhill days.

More than 60 centimetres of snow fell on the course Wednesday and Thursday forcing the cancellation of Thursday's third training run.

The weather, cloudy, cleared Friday after the first 10 minutes of the race so that the majority of the racers ran under sunny skies.

The skiers tested the top section of the course for the first time Friday morning. The first three gates had been closed during the two training runs because of fresh snow. A total of 54 racers completed the 2,601 metre course with a vertical drop of 687 metres.

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Marriott Hotel, Al Wahe Hall, JD 7

Crazy About George
Kathryn Magestro (soprano) and John Ferguson (piano)

In cooperation with the American Center

Tuesday, 1 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Terra Sancta Cultural Center, JD 7

Pilar Jurado (soprano),
Manuel Rodriguez (flute) and Julio Mañaz (piano)

In cooperation with Instituto Cervantes

Wednesday, 2 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Radisson SAS Hotel-Philadelphia Hall, JD 2X

A Concert of Musical Relics
(harp, violin, cello, horn, clarinet and piano and vocals)

All proceeds will go to the Fund in Memory of Dina Habash at Al Malath Foundation for Humanistic Care

Saturday, 5 December 1998 - 8:00 p.m.
Union Bank Hall, JD 7

Italian Piano Duo
Barbara Cattabiani and Domenico Poccia

In cooperation with the Italian Embassy

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A - Engineer

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- Proficiency in English language is a must
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- Minimum experience is (7) years for BSc and (5) years for MSc

The qualified persons shall submit their CV and certificates to the Jordan Valley Authority (Address below) no later than 14:00 local time on 5th of December, 1998.

Address

Secretary General

Jordan Valley Authority

Amman P.O. Box 2769 - Jordan

Fax.: 962-6-5689916

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هكذا اصابه الشلل